

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE (GSS)

Thursday, Sept 22th, 2016; 9:00 – 10:30AM; MUB 332

Agenda

I. Opening Business

A. Greetings, Check-Ins, Action Item Steps

1. Present GSS Senators and Guests: Drummond Biles, Andrea Jilling, Mark Anthony (Guest), Nate Stafford, Jordan Coulombe, Patrick LaCroix, Dante Broadbent, Saman Salari, Myles Lynch, Jovanna Milosavljevic, Jochen Wirsing, Joseph Jenson, Ezra Temko, Holland Prior, Jessie Bolin, Jin Lee, Beth Sheckler

B. Approval of minutes

Minutes approved

II. External Business

A. Undergraduate Student Senate

Absent

III. Internal Business

A. Reports

1. J. Jenson attended Campus Planning Committee and requested on their behalf that senators compile list of broken or deteriorating facilities and equipment. D. Biles suggested he create a folder and label as "Campus Planning." J. Jenson noted the committee also discussed the recent endowment applied to a new football scoreboard; the USS president supports the investment and will write a public statement endorsing the use of funds.
2. A. Jilling provided an update on the financial survey and noted the Finance Committee will refine the content to fit on a single, two-sided sheet. She added that the next step will be to revise and redistribute the survey with the intention of having compiled data prior to entering the fee review process.
3. N. Stafford added that some survey responses included both undergraduate and graduate student debt, rather than just debt acquired during graduate school as the question asks; while some respondents used the qualitative portion to specify their debt throughout their entire education and grad school is adding to that.
4. A. Jilling noted the survey is rich in qualitative responses and that the summer finances are particularly interesting because over 60% of students have to find an outside job to support themselves over summer. That could be an important piece of information GSS could share with UNH administration. She added conference financing is also interesting, with half of students unable to attend a single conference likely due to a lack of financial support for students. A. Jilling also stated that acute financial stressors suggest students are unprepared. She restated that providing administrators with data should have a better outcome than without data.

5. J. Milosavljevic suggested the survey differentiate between international students who are likely prevented from working outside of an assistantship. P. LaCroix added that there are many international students who receive money from their home countries. J. Milosavljevic continued that the survey should note how much money is being spent overall; for example, MA applying to PhD program. She gave a final suggestion that the survey should consider asking how many students are paying mandatory fees. P. LaCroix supported this idea to know how many people get a pass on fees such as PhD candidates receiving a waiver.
6. M. Lynch noted he was the person who sent out the GSS survey and the response rate was much higher through canvas compared to direct communication. Suggested doing both. A. Jilling added GSS could offer a prize, email her with suggestions.
7. D. Biles noted that as of the end of this week GSS is opening all of the committees to the general student body and to email him if you haven't selected a committee yet. He added Financial Affairs Committee is where GSS is investing most effort.

B. External/Internal Committees

Open to general graduate population 09-23-16

C. Interim Dean Cari Moorhead

1. C. Moorhead mentioned advancement in virtual space: the UNH website will better represent graduate students and the Graduate School now has its own twitter and hashtag #unhgradschool, which she stated will increase visibility by amplifying existing projects or events.
2. C. Moorhead noted PhD numbers last year were at their highest and standard test scores (GRE) are solid.
3. C. Moorhead added that the Graduate School is putting more effort into the professional development; for example, RCR training. She noted, however, that they are not trying to impinge on individual departments but rather offer a foundational structure.
4. C. Moorhead noted the success of the writing workshop - first year was rudimentary, but will improve as students add value. Grad school takes care of the logistics and provides dinner. She added the workshop led into summer and is now looking for funding internally and externally to support writing workshops.
5. C. Moorhead emphasized the success of the Three-Minute Thesis - 300 participants last year, up from probably 50 since its inception. She added it is proportionately bigger than the Undergraduate Research Conference. C. Moorhead showed the new provost six of the Three-Minute Thesis presentations and she was very impressed. M. Lynch added it is important to do because all the judges come outside of academia so it's a great opportunity to network.
6. C. Moorhead noted that the Graduate School is purchasing an app that will provide notifications of opportunities outside of UNH, located on the side bar in Canvas. For example, dissertation opportunities are sent to the smallest group of graduate students without missing anyone.
7. C. Moorhead noted the Music Hall and MUB movies are free for grad students.

D. Graduate Department Liaisons

1. N. Stafford passed around sheet regarding departmental liaisons asking senators to identify what constituencies they have contacted, etc. He added if departments have not responded yet contact again.

E. Guidelines of how to advise (interactions/meetings)

F. Stonewall Grads LGBTQ+ organization

1. M. Anthony spoke regarding his organization's work with TransUNH. Last year USS passed a resolution to change individual bathrooms to be gender neutral. Drummond asked for the definition of "gender inclusive." This bathroom is for anyone to use. Universal design, so no matter where you are from you understand the use of the space. To be consistent with national movement is to say gender inclusive. The issue has seen some dormancy. There has been some push back on it. Suggests grad students could pass the same resolution to show support.
2. M. Anthony noted a second topic related to insurance. He explained UNH will have gender changing surgeries on the faculty insurance, and there is already hormone replacement therapy available. He emphasized the importance that grad students have access as well.
3. M. Anthony noted a third issue involves changes in leadership at the counseling center. He explained to begin the sex change process an individual must go to the counseling center to get a letter of reference, however, they paused the ability to write references. B. Sheckler asked if hormone therapy is covered on the grad student insurance plan. M. Anthony thought it was not but unsure. He added that access to reference letters could be an influential issue to potential graduate students when selecting a school.
4. D. Biles asked M. Anthony to bring something back to discuss at the next GSS meeting. He asked if undergraduate students also participate in the organization as well? M. Anthony responds Stonewall is consistently attend by only grad students but TransUNH is run solely by undergraduate students.

Skipped over to events.

IV. Main function:

Participate in Fee discussion
Represent Grads in Committees
Provide community

V. Upcoming Events

A. Military & Veteran Services Office Weekly Brown Bag Lunches

Every Wednesday, 11:30pm-1:00pm, MUB 321 (During Fall & Spring Semester)

The lunches provide opportunities for networking with fellow Vets, connecting with various campus services, announcements, explaining benefits, and any important service changes.

1. D. Biles asked senators to distribute to constituencies or anyone who would be interested.
2. Broadbent added that the office is always looking for graduate student representation.

B. Homecoming Poster Session

October 1st, 2016, 12:00-3:00pm

1. M. Lynch discussed the opportunity if senators or other graduate students want to present a poster that the Grad School will cover cost for materials. He added the audience will be families, alumni, other students; it is an opportunity to present some research. Currently, there are about 10 people presenting and there is room available to participate suggesting senators email him or talk after meeting.
2. J. Milosavljevic noted that she will be there and the event will have easels and poster board, just bring posters. She added there will be lunch available prior to the event. She will send an email.

C. Wildcats Working Parents Network Lunch

Friday, October 7, 12:00-1:30

1. B. Sheckler noted that last year there was a kerfuffle and a special committee was organized to establish new communication channels for parents to find day care opportunities. She added that the first lunch is not a family-friendly event and she does not have child care coverage at the time. The event is a good opportunity to represent graduate student interests.
2. D. Biles noted that the big issue is participating in the fee discussion, especially leveraging survey results in the fee process this year. He stated the fee review letter will be available on canvas.
3. D. Biles added that another big issue is representing grad schools on all the committees and intending to identify action items for all of the senators. He explained the process: at greetings and check ins each senator will have action item(s) to accomplish in the next two weeks; for example, contacting a particular person. He noted that the items will be focused items wants to prepare senators for the next meeting.

V. Check-outs

A. Senator action items

B. Current Issues

Dental and Vision benefits
Departmental Meetings
Financial Survey
Mandatory Fees
Graduate Stipends
Graduate Student Space
Dissemination of GSS information
Other

VI. Adjourn

10:31am

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessie Bolin, Communications Officer
Graduate Student Senate
University of New Hampshire