

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE (GSS)
Thursday, Dec 1st, 2016; 9:00 – 10:30 AM; MUB 332

Draft Minutes

I. Opening Business

- A. Greetings, Check-Ins
In Attendance: Drummond Biles, Nate Stafford, Andrea Jilling, Jessie Bolin, Holland Prior, Jordan Coulombe, Jochen Wirsing, Jin Lee, Julianne Riley, Gökhan Kumpas, Jovanna Milosavljevic, Kristen Melamed
- B. Approval of minutes

II. External Business

- A. Undergraduate Student Senate
Absent
- B. Grad staff writer
Sexual assault speaker, December 7th
Suggestions can be emailed directly to K. Melamed.

III. Internal Business

- A. Reports
 - 1. D. Biles thanked everyone that attended Tuesday. The 15-16 fee directors felt like they connected with students and enjoyed the opportunity.
 - 2. D. Biles, A. Jilling, Dean Moorhead, Provost Targett, and some others met about fees. Dean Moorhead and Provost Targett are open to making some big changes. Big thanks to Dean Moorhead and Provost Targett. Hopefully there will be some concrete changes for next year.
- B. Fee Vote
 - 1. Counseling Center
 - H. Prior made multiple attempts to meet with center but no response. However, no fee increase proposed.
 - A. Jilling asked about changes in staff. H. Prior responded she is not aware of anything.
 - N. Stafford added that there will be one or two people on call on the weekends and overnight mostly for grad students. Some staff may not be willing to work these other hours so there may be staff turnover. GSS could be part of the search process. They are still trying to find a male counselor to fill that need. If our fees don't change, we can also say we would love to be part of this hiring process.
 - D. Biles clarified he would like not only approval but also recommendations.
 - A. Jilling suggested we promote continuous counseling services as they are currently offline in August. N. Stafford added that he spoke with Joan and vocalized that concern, especially paired with the new director search.
 - H. Prior moved to a vote on counseling fee, seconded by J. Coulombe. Passed unanimously.
 - A. Jilling asked if we have quorum which would be two-thirds of all senators.

- GSS did not have quorum.
 - D. Biles noted we will discuss the fees and vote when we have quorum.
2. Health Services
- Actually, the fee decreased by 20% because it moved to CAPS (Career Center) which graduate students do not pay.
 - J. Coulombe asked what is going on with that. D. Biles clarified that they didn't want to add on another fee. We can still use services, but will not have to pay towards new career center.
 - D. Biles noted health services is saving to build a new facility, however, the CAPS fee now dips into their reserves. They will likely need to increase their fee in the future. We may want to include that in our letter.
 - N. Stafford asked if it was FY19 and what the fee would increase by? A. Jilling provided details on how the overall loss is \$1.8M. They were asked to reduce the fee while offering the same services. While it doesn't hurt their operating budget, it does impede long term plans by using reserve monies. They used a consulting firm to identify other revenue sources to fill that gap rather than increasing fees in future years. Example, add new services like physical therapy. A. Jilling supported commending them for their responsible financial management.
 - N. Stafford asked how they could offer these additional services without adding to staffing costs? A. Jilling clarified that she does not know about details. Another example is to charge students for procedures or students paying out of pocket for visits and services. GSS could speak more generally to the issue. N. Stafford supported some kind of additional revenue source as it would cost same as using off-campus services yet be more convenient on campus.
 - J. Coulombe added we should use letter to encourage them to reach out to us as they come up with ideas. Perhaps appoint a liaison.
 - H. Prior asked if there was conversation about adding vision and dental to insurance? D. Biles responded it tends not to be financially feasible but there are state plans that offer that. He added GSS could also reiterate our support in the letter.
 - D. Biles recapped commending management thus far, identify new revenue streams, support dental and vision benefits, and include us in the conversations.
 - General feelings for health services positive.
3. SHARPP
- D. Biles noted it is a small fee. One of our concerns is uncertainty about continued financial support. Pre-warned us if administration changes things. The call line is 24/7 and they are looking to expand services; very effective with what they do. Asked for anything we want to add other than commend them for their service?
 - N. Stafford noted we could reiterate our desire to be part of the conversation moving forward, especially if the fee changes. This is important for all students and we do not want any of these services to be cut.
 - General feelings for SHARPP positive.
4. Campus Rec.
- Clarified: Whittemore Center debt.
 - D. Biles noted that the Whittemore center is a debt and we should not pay since we do not get hockey tickets. S. Hall tries to work for more graduate student services like grad student yoga.

- J. Coulombe echoed D. Biles that we should not pay fee unless we have greater access to facility/services.
 - N. Stafford noted he and E. Temko spoke with S. Hall and asked about potential pool fee. It would be an opt in fee. Could have events there since cooking is permitted and grad school could buy passes.
 - D. Biles clarified there is a \$99 summer fee to use the pool, campus rec. The fee went away only because of offline construction. Second, there will also be a \$2-3 per entry fee/user fee during school year. The pool was constructed by UNH/Durham and not out of the fee. Because the pool would be used by Durham residents, students did not want to subsidize it.
 - J. Milosavljevic noted it should have been planned prior rather than charging us the fee after the fact. Seems irresponsible.
 - D. Biles noted we could vote it down to send a message.
 - J. Coulombe added they could look for outside sources of funding to alleviate the burden placed on students due to the lack of forethought.
 - A. Jilling noted we have multiple arguments to shoot down this proposal. Bundling the pool fee with the summer fee and now it is being reinstated and increasing costs for the pool to operate it. Seems like multiple levels of irresponsibility.
 - D. Biles noted we will vote on each fee independently.
 - G. Kumpas asked if they have any idea how many people are going to buy it? D. Biles assumed they thought about that; the town of Durham is subsidizing residents by 30%.
 - J. Coulombe asked if they brought the grad assistantships back. That is one of the issues they brought up last year. D. Biles noted that they probably are not hiring additional personnel. J. Coulombe proposed including support for partnerships with programs like kinesiology through grad assistantships.
 - A. Jilling asked if there were discounts for spouses. D. Biles not sure.
 - J. Milosavljevic asked what their revenue is from non-university users? D. Biles noted it is probably in flux and will probably take a few years for people to return due to construction phase.
 - General feelings for campus fee negative.
5. Whittemore Center (labeled as campus rec + whitt arena)
- D. Biles noted this is generally debt, can use for free skate and intramural sports.
 - J. Coulombe suggested move over to athletics fee or give us more access.
 - D. Biles noted David May might give us 50 free tickets for season.
 - J. Coulombe noted that the arena is only half full on game days.
 - B. Sheckler added that if we want tickets we could have blackout dates. D. Biles added they once opened it up to grad students during the month of January so one suggestion is to do that.
 - N. Stafford asked if we pay full price? J. Wirsing noted that there is a student price at least for football and probably applies to hockey.
 - J. Wirsing noted that he would attend for the atmosphere rather than the sport itself.
 - B. Sheckler suggested asking for 6,000 tickets but only \$2k for January. Agreed with J. Wirsing's point of the atmosphere being important.
 - J. Wirsing noted that we pay something so we should not restrict ourselves. There is no reason we should only go for the less desirable dates and events.
 - A. Jilling supported previous point and now it is more visible while knowing students

get nothing from the Whittemore. She added that free tickets come from the athletic fee we do not pay.

- G. Kumpas suggested negotiating and including blackout dates.
 - N. Stafford noted that undergrads pay Whittemore and athletic fee. Whittemore fee is the same and the \$1k athletic fee gets them free tickets to all sports. We should advocate for this fee being equivalent in services. We should either get additional services or remove fee. He is confused what we are getting compared to what undergrads are getting out of a different fee?
 - J. Milosavljevic clarified that the largest portion of the Graduate Research Conference goes towards Whittemore. Grad school should be able to spend money doing other things for us. GRC uses that space, but that is it.
 - General feelings on Whittemore fee negative
6. Turf Fields (Arena)
- H. Prior asked what the turf fields encompass? D. Biles clarified one in front of Whittemore Center, and turf fields including the soccer field.
 - B. Sheckler asked who can rent them. H. Prior clarified organizations can rent because fraternities and sororities rent them frequently.
 - J. Wirsing asked if this includes football field. D. Biles thought budget seemed too small to include football field.
 - A. Jilling speculated that there are maybe up to 100 grad students that use it for intramural sports.
 - J. Coulombe asked if the intramurals are covered by the rec fee? D. Biles thought probably from both.
 - B. Sheckler asked why they are separated? D. Biles noted that USS requested they be separate.
 - J. Wirsing suggested we get proportioned fees based on our use. Is there any way we could reduce our fees based on the percentage it is used by grad students on average?
 - B. Sheckler agreed but they will say it is not a usage fee rather a large pot. That is the stance. A. Jilling noted that you could apply that to other fees like transportation or counseling. J. Wirsing noted that this is not a necessity like transportation or counseling, but rather a luxury to play intramural sports.
 - N. Stafford noted that the argument was made at Grad Council that these are like taxes for school funds. To what extent do these fees contribute to the campus community? Campus rec fee can benefit many. The Whittemore fee we only use for GRC. The turf field fee we do have the opportunity to use. Some of these are usage-based fees. If everyone is on the same page, then we could try to alter the argument as a tax.
Taxation without representation.
 - D. Biles mentioned he asked S. Hall how the pool could be a user fee while not campus rec. She suggested that this could be looked at as preventative, and healthy students could reduce use of health services.
 - J. Milosavljevic noted that we want to be healthy, but sometimes it is just not feasible.
 - J. Lee noted that they need to find a way to advertise to locals. Introducing quality summer or weekend programs could attract a larger user base (Massachusetts). The renovation costs are placed on students in fees. When we first heard about pool it wasn't for students, but now that use is questioned then burden is placed on students.
 - D. Biles clarified that outdoor pool cost is opt in. J. Lee believed that costs may still be

distributed to other fees indirectly.

- G. Kumpas added that health insurance often subsidizes gym memberships. The problem is we do not know what we are paying for (i.e. transparency).
- J. Coulombe noted he is more comfortable 'socializing' some of these fees. If we start pulling out of certain fees, then they will go up in other places (i.e. Whittemore transfer to transportation). Expressed concern for usage approach.
- J. Wirsing agreed, but wondered if we could still save since these are most expensive fees.
- N. Stafford noted the distribution of fees... advocated for usage rather than tax. The current model is everyone charges everyone for everything. RCM model would be difficult to change; must go through board of trustees. Preventative services lean toward health services rather than gym; how we define 'preventative'.
- B. Sheckler supported N. Stafford's point. Added argument is reductionist to say exercise will be preventative. Additionally, it is less convenient for grad students who live off campus.
- J. Wirsing noted that even activity not specified as 'preventative' (i.e. basketball with friends) can still be healthy.
- B. Sheckler responded that the direct link is false causation.
- J. Coulombe noted if we accept S. Hall's model we want insurance to subsidize.
- A. Jilling clarified that Staff and Postdocs have that model.
- J. Wirsing expressed concern that we would be adding fees by adding services (other gym memberships). J. Coulombe responded that the idea is long term cost reduction of health care. J. Wirsing noted that long term would not be effective cost savings since graduate students are here for short term.
- B. Sheckler noted if S. Hall wants to make the link then we should advocate for pushing it to insurance.
- D. Biles noted we are at 10:30am and we will need more time and quorum. Proposed a special additional meeting next Monday as the letter is due Wednesday.
- H. Prior suggested voting electronically.
- J. Milosavljevic added discussion could be on canvas.
- B. Sheckler added Academic Tech encourages use of new Zoom technology.
- Some senators agree to stay until 11:00 am.

7. MUB

- MUB fee covers our renting of space in MUB
- J. Milosavljevic expressed concern that services of MUB could be improved or increase benefits for grad students.
- B. Sheckler noted that professional development events now cost fees.
- J. Wirsing added that most grad students don't live on campus and evening events are not feasible (especially with available transportation).
- B. Sheckler asked about programming aimed at grad students and commuters. D. Biles clarified it tends to focus on commuters, which indirectly fits well with grad students.
- J. Wirsing mentioned the commuter lounge that is typically empty.
- J. Coulombe supported a grad student designated lounge. Having a specific space would be tremendous.
- D. Biles noted that we used to have a grad space downstairs. No longer designated. B.

Sheckler supported point and added Dean Moorhead would like a grad school and student space to host professional development events.

- N. Stafford wanted to know why CAPS fee didn't come from MUB fee rather than Health Services. D. Biles guessed that it is because Health Services is fiscally responsible while the MUB is in debt.
- B. Sheckler noted that fee is increasing while services are reducing (i.e. charging grad school for events). MUB is now charging outside programs.
- N. Stafford noted that clarifications for exactly what MUB fee pays, specifically what do graduate students get compared to undergraduate students; further, what does the Student Activity fee get undergrads in the MUB?
- A. Jilling clarified student activity fee goes into student organizations for undergrads.

8. Transportation

9. Technology

10. Housing

11. Dining

IV. Upcoming Events

1. First Thursday! Today!
Scorpions Bar and Grill, 5:00 – 7:00pm

V. Check-outs and Evaluations

Adjourn 11:00 am