

Meeting Minutes for General Meeting of UNH Graduate Student Senate
Tuesday, February 9, 2016
Ezra Temko, President, Facilitating

I. Call to Order: Ezra Temko President, 12:10.

II. Roll Call

A. Executive Committee

Ezra Temko	President
Mike Verney	Vice President
Felicia Fowler	Programs Coordinator
Paul Rowe	Clerk
Patrick Lacroix	Treasurer
Andrea Jilling	External Affairs Officer

B. Senators Present

Matt Smith	GRAD
Drummond Biles	CEPS
Myles Lynch	COLA
Felicia Fowler	CHHS
Wade Heath	PAUL
Nathaniel Stafford	COLA
Damian Manda	CEPS
Jovana Milosavljevic	COLA
Dante Broadbent	CHHS
Catherine Welter	COLA

C. Executive Committee Members/Senators Not Present:

Taylor Hodgdon	CEPS
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Devin Batchelder	COLSA
Melika Nouri	Forest Park
Kevin McMahon	LAW

D. Members at Large Present: Bonnie Barlow and Henry Herndon.

E. Guests: None.

III. Greetings, Check-Ins, Introduction of Guests.

A. Paul Rowe announced he would proxy vote for Taylor Hodgdon.

B. Meeting agenda approved.

IV. Outside Business.

A. **USS Student Senate Report:** New USS Senator Liaison will be appointed. No one present at this meeting.

V. Internal Business.

A. Reports.

1. **Counseling: Graduate student support groups have been approved.** Still in scheduling phase. Mike Verney announced he wrote a professional thank you letter officially from GSS that could feature GSS Senators signatures.
2. **Bonnie Barlow reported from President's Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities.** They are looking for nominations for an award for a person/group that goes above and beyond advocating for people with disabilities. The Commission is working on greater access for pre-admissions status veterans who don't have access to counseling services. During this matriculating period they will have access to counseling services. They have expressed concern over the lack of discussion about disability issues in Community Task Force discussions. Mike Verney proposed that GSS could write an official letter in support of making these services available.
3. **Spouse Campus Rec Fee. Stacey Hall agreed to lower Campus Recreation fees for spouses of graduate students from \$190.00 to \$100.00/semester.** The Financial Affairs Committee proposed that The Whittemore Center debt be transferred to the Athletics fee. Undergraduate representatives were opposed to this idea. Fees were approved as originally proposed. Patrick Lacroix noted that the Financial Affairs Committee would have more information shortly. Only GSS expressed concern over the hike in fees. USS and GSS did not have enough

solidarity to pressure the institution to lower these fees.

4. **Handbooks.** The Graduate School implemented GSS-suggested updates to Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Assistant handbooks.
5. **GSS Yearly Elections will open soon. GSS Senators were encouraged to find replacements for their soon vacant positions.**
6. Dante Broadbent is conducting a survey to assess responses to the rise in the Campus Rec fee.
7. **Student Health Benefits Plan.** Ted Kirkpatrick will explore the possibility of providing dental/vision services for graduate students.
8. **Jovana Milosavljevic proposed a motion for GSS to request an evaluation/assessment of dental/vision options to include in the Student Benefits Health Plan.**

1. Yay, 16. Nay, 0. Abstentions, 0. Motion passed.

9. **Nathaniel Stafford announced that the Graduate School would send out a Qualtrix survey to assess graduate student representation at departmental faculty meetings. Graduate assistants should be made privy to faculty decisions. Discussions will continue with Graduate Counsel and Faculty Senate. Mike Verney suggested reaching out to administrative assistants as another effective way to gather information.**
10. **USS discussed a Plastic Water Bottle ban and The Divestment Program at their last meeting. Andrea Jilling mentioned that universities have been divesting in companies extracting fossil fuels. While divestment seemed complicated, it was suggested to come back to the discussion of the plastic water bottle ban the following week.**
11. **GSS carried out a brainstorming exercise to identify action items GSS should prioritize and pursue. The resulting list was as follows:**

Services

- Transportation
- Better parking during vacation/summer/J-Term (There are no buses to West Edge on holidays)
- Covered bike racks near housing!
- Crossing guards, more of them

Childcare

- UNH to initiate evaluation/assessment of how to provide childcare on campus.

Housing

- Have a meeting with Director of Housing, David May, Ted Kirkpatrick, and interested grad students about what grad. housing ought to look like and get them to agree on a commitment to have this by year X.
- Send out, via Ted Kirkpatrick/Dean of Students or Housing a grad-student survey of what they'd like to see in a grad housing unit this semester

Career services

- Ask career services about the feasibility of holding a grad. student specific career fair in the fall or noting companies targeting grads.
- Grad specific career service liaison/advocate. Could be existing person with this focus.
- More career services counseling for grads

Counseling

- More counseling services for grads

Classifieds

- Restore UNH Classifieds website

Email

- Make it easier/streamlined for grad. students to change their email address to another alias

Campus Policies

- Smoking ban

Finances \$\$\$

Fees

- Candidates not pay fees – what would this change about other fees for non-PhD candidate fees?
- RCM decouple from fees
- Campus rec fee waiver for TAs not living on campus
- How much does UNH spend per year (in fees and tuition) on Campus Rec and athletics? Need to look at athletic teams, salary, etc.
- Encourage or require GSS Treasurer to meet once per semester with the Financial Affairs Officer to discuss fees and services
- Solicit wider feedback on fees via a survey in the fall to focus our discussions and better represent grad population as a whole
- What is the per capita cost of bus ridership for each bus route (including depreciation)?
- Campus Rec collect data on individual usage of facilities, classes, etc.

Beyond fees

- Have a separate grad student orientation for helping to clarify all financial aspects. It could be a 1-2 hour seminar led by someone from Business Services (payroll questions, stipend info, who to go to with questions, etc.)
- Fee and tuition receipt for each fiscal year: What did my dollars pay for? i.e. faculty salary, buildings, research, etc.
- Increase stipend to be equivalent to other similar schools

Government/Cnty. Relations (and funding for some)

- Letter to Speaker Jasper to present students' concerns and needs re: funding
- Talk with local reps in communities throughout NH about making closer connections with UNH – bringing jobs to center of state
- See if grad students can negotiate with legislators to start a grant program for NH-focused research as a way to raise more money for grad students
- Connect with existing efforts to reach out to legislators (UNH Works office)
- Emphasizing value of UNH to center of the state of N.H. (Merrimack Corridor)
- Collect data from gov. bodies – what do they have?

Governance

GSS governance

- Revamp GSS website
 - I second this
 - MOTO -> wasted energy better spent elsewhere
 - Use energy to increase engagement

- Fund a position for grad student advocate/support person
- What are the populations of international first year students that may not be represented at GSS?
 - First year International Senate seat
- Setting up an anonymous (if they wish) comment box on the GSS website

GSS & the undergraduate Student Senate

- Require Student Senate bills to also be voted on in the GSS before they go to President Huddleston
- See if we can get the Student Senate to change its name to the Undergraduate Student Senate / Add U to Undergrad Student Senate (two index cards on this)
- Liaison to USS

Departmental / academic / GA

- TA evaluation of prof. <-> prof. eval of TA
- UNH-wide policy that department meetings include a graduate student rep, excluding for confidential personnel discussions
- Push for department based graduate handbooks

Communication, collaboration, and social programming

- Partner with other NH grad school/student bodies; either join NGAPS or form NH-based grad association (this could also be cross-listed with GSS governance)
- Monthly interdisciplinary research newsletter for all departments
- Schoolwide listing/calendar of seminars with topics and abstracts to promote attendance and cross-disciplinary communication.
- More grad student social events variety of venues or themes (outside bars)
 - Outdoor activities
- More grad-student based events
 - Professional development?
 - Social?
 - We need a paid coordinator
- Interdisciplinary grad student space for collaboration and beer
- Larger cohort across disciplines
 - For all things
 - Intramurals
 - Socials
 - competitions
- Get a TNH writer to report on grad students (or ask them to create a grad student opinion column or something specifically for grad student issues).

The list will be sent out via survey to senators and attendees, and then to all graduate students, for further prioritizing.

VI. Adjournment – 1:35 pm. Next meeting February 23, 2016, 12:10pm 1:50pm, MUB 338

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Rowe, Clerk
 Graduate Student Senate
 University of New Hampshire