

Meeting Minutes for General Meeting of UNH Graduate Student Senate

Tuesday November 3rd, 2015

Ezra Temko, President, Facilitating

I. Call to Order: Ezra Temko, President, 12:15

II. Roll Call

A. Executive Committee

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| Ezra Temko | President |
| Mike Verney | Vice President |
| Paul Rowe | Clerk |
| Sherard Harrington | Programs Coordinator |
| Patrick Lacroix | Treasurer |
| Andrea Jilling | External Affairs Officer |

B. Senators Present

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| Matt Smith | GRAD |
| Tom Cronin | Manchester |
| Kevin McMahon | LAW |
| Drummond Biles | CEPS |
| Myles Lynch | COLA |
| Felicia Fowler | CHHS |
| Mary Grace Elliott | COLA |
| Wade Heath | PAUL |
| Taylor Hodgdon | CEPS |
| Jovana Milosavljevic | COLA |
| Dante Broadbent | CHHS |

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| Devin Batchelder | COLSA |
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C. Executive Committee Members/Senators Not Present

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| Damian Manda | CEPS |
| Melika Nouri | Forest Park |
| Catherine Welter | COLA |

D. Members at Large Present: Nathaniel Stafford.

E. Guests: No guests present.

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

- A. **Greetings.** President Ezra Temko greeted GSS members and thanked all of those members who have met with their constituents. Ezra Temko provided an overview of the agenda and asked Senators and Members at Large to fill in sign-in sheets with sign-ups for the GSS Newsletter. Ezra Temko asked if there were any brief announcements to be made that GSS should become cognizant of outside of the issues on the Agenda.

- B. **Patrick Lacroix reminded GSS of an upcoming meeting on the fee review process, one of which with Terri Winters on Monday, November 16, at 2 p.m. Terri is the head of UNH Technology and is thus responsible for the technology fee.** Patrick Lacroix informed GSS of a second meeting involving SHARPP and Health Services, and informed GSS that anyone interested in either of these should feel free to attend. Patrick Lacroix informed GSS that he would send out details regarding these meetings.

- C. **Mike Verney announced that the first meeting of the Governance Committee would take place on Wednesday November, 4th from 1:00-300pm. Mike Verney reminded GSS of the email he sent to GSS soliciting information about the policies of graduate student attendance of departmental meetings across UNH.** Can graduate students attend department meetings? Do they have voting rights? GSS should have recorded data on this. If anyone needs liaisons for the constituent departments they represent as Senators, they should reach out to them and gather this data so GSS can compile this information in a spreadsheet for reference.

- D. **Check-ins and Introduction of Guests took place.** Andrea Jilling would proxy for Matt Smith who was leaving early. Felicia Fowler would proxy for Devin Batchelder who was leaving early. Drummond Biles would proxy for Damian Manda who was absent. Mary Grace Elliott would proxy for Catherine Welter who was absent.

- E. Andrea Jilling announced she met with Drummond Biles to increase voter engagement within the graduate student population and they are working on candidate resource cards explaining how each candidate voted on higher education, and providing any information pertaining to graduate students.
- F. Felicia Fowler announced that Maureen Crawford gave an excellent job talk for the Graduate School and passed around flyers for upcoming Graduate School events, including an event on November 19th entitled “Hiring in Academia.”
- G. Jovana Milosavljevic announced that the ad hoc committee on semesters vs. trimesters at UNH would be meeting on Friday and urged GSS to contact her with any pertinent suggestions, comments, questions, or concerns.
- H. Mary Grace Elliott invited GSS members to attend the English Graduate Organization’s Trivia Night the night of Tuesday November 3rd at Portsmouth’s Book and Bar.

IV. Outside Business

- A. **Undergraduate Student Senate reports:** No Undergraduate Student Senate members were in attendance to report. There was no GSS representative at the last USS meeting to report.

V. Internal Business

- A. **Ezra Temko asked for a process vote to approve the revised GSS minutes for 20 October 2015.**

- 1. 20 October 2015 minutes approved.

- B. **University/Liaison Committees.**

- 1. Ezra Temko asked if there were any questions on submitted reports.

- 2. **Center for Global, Race, and Diversity Studies**

- a. Ezra Temko mentioned that Catherine Welter stated that although President Huddleston has expressed support for filling the gap left by this position in some capacity, this is more like 95% likely, and it is slightly uncertain as to what specific form this will take.
 - b. Dante Broadbent asked to extent President Huddleston was involved in his President’s Commissions. Ezra Temko noted that there are four Commissions under, and out of, the President’s office. The Associate Vice President for Community, Equity, and Diversity is involved with these committees. It is the

President's blessing that UNH has these commissions, but President Huddleston does not review these minutes.

VI. Current Issues

A. Safety Concerns Meeting with Durham P.D.

1. Mike Verney reminded GSS that his meeting with Chief of Police Paul Dean is upon us and stressed that he would like GSS and other student leaders to consider the question of whether or not the UNH Police Department should have body cameras installed in their uniforms. This installation would cost \$50,000 per camera. With UNH's growing population, there is currently not a sufficient amount of officers to patrol, and secure, all areas of the UNH campus. Especially with rising incidents of aggressive behavior, Mike Verney brought up the point that this money for camera installation could be alternately put towards hiring an additional police officer.
2. Dante Broadbent brought up the safety concern of bikes being exposed at the Forest Park parking lot. Bikes need more protection in areas such as this.
 - a. Mike Verney stated that this would be brought up during the meeting.
3. Mary Grace Elliott stated that as it's becoming darker earlier due to daylight savings, driving through campus to A Lot is dangerous with students crossing the street under poor, dim lighting.
4. Mike Verney announced that he brought up this issue last year through the Campus Safety Walk, but nothing was done to solve this problem.
5. Andrea Jilling asked what the benefits are of officers wearing body cameras.
 - b. Mike Verney explained that if there's an incident in terms of arrest, there is clear evidence of how the officer handled the situation. The judicial system seems to favor what the officer did in these situations without any tangible evidence, particularly with incidents of gun violence, over the account of the citizen or perpetrator. Body cameras would ensure police officers meet these standards.
 - c. Andrea Jilling brought up an argument against body cameras, and she brought up a story about two friends who noticed incidences of micro-aggressions or aggressive comments that have been said on

campus in front of police officers, and although these officers heard these comments and did nothing to intervene, an increase in personnel may be more effective in terms of preventing micro-aggressions than the installation of body cameras on officers. These incidents may not illicit violence, but Andrea Jilling claimed she is in support of hiring more personnel.

6. Tom Cronin noted that when Concord bills were passed requiring police officers to wear body cameras, a police officer accountability fund helped to offset the cost. Funding may influence this decision. Tom Cronin noted that Manchester campus has only one parking lot near the main building and there were recent robberies that put students on edge.
7. Ezra Temko brought up that graffiti vandalism stays on signs for entire semesters. If these were taken care of and properly removed, people would be less likely to vandalize, as there would be no graffiti to encourage more graffiti. Ezra Temko noted that there should be grant funding to apply for to help meet the cost of body camera installation on police officers. UNH should partner with the town of Durham on this issue. We should also look into whether or not these officers are police officers, as opposed to safety or security officers. Would graduate students be paying for these costs? Should graduate students be looking to the town of Durham for financial support?
8. Drummond Biles brought up the point that UNH has safety officers as well as police officers. As safety officers are paid less, could UNH hire more of these individuals in order to have a stronger, safer campus? What are the differences between safety officers and police officers?

B. Fee Review Process.

1. Patrick Lacroix discussed the fee review process and announced a Friday meeting from 2:00-4:00pm including members of the Financial Affairs Committee and the Executive Committee of GSS, noting he would send out notes on what is being discussed specifically. Future meetings will include Transportation, Housing, Counseling, Campus Recreation, and the MUB. Next Friday November 13th there will be a meeting with Health Services, Counseling Services, and SHARPP. If anyone has any questions about services and fees graduate students have to pay, they are welcome to join these meetings. Patrick Lacroix noted that a letter would be drafted to propose what their general feelings are on these issues to share with GSS. Although the next regular meeting regarding this process is happening on December 1st, these issues can be discussed at GSS beforehand.

2. Dante Broadbent suggested the following questions: When was the last time they assessed the population they serve? Who did this assessment, and how did they obtain the data? How does one know what the needs of their constituencies are? Did they make it for them, or did they receive the information directly from their constituencies? These are important, telling questions to ask.

C. Upcoming Meetings.

1. **Meeting with Stacey Hall, Campus Rec Director: Tuesday 11/24, 12:15pm, in MUB 114F.** Ezra Temko stated that everyone is invited to this meeting occurring the same time as regular GSS meetings.
2. **Meeting with Jaime Nolan, Associate VP for Community, Equity, & Diversity: Thursday, 11/12, 12:40pm, MUB 207.** President Huddleston wrote back to GSS encouraging the solution pertaining to micro-aggressions. Next Executive Committee meeting will be on Thursday at 12:40 pm. Ezra Temko encouraged people to come and conversation with her.
3. **Meeting with PT (Vasu) Vasudevan, interim Provost, Thurs. 11/19, 1:30pm-2pm, Thompson Hall TBD.** Ezra Temko noted that a list of who wants to go is required for room reservations. RSVP is required for this very reason. If you let him know if you can go, they would love to have you.

D. Upcoming Programming Events.

1. Sherard Harrington noted that there would be a Democratic Debate Screening on Saturday November 14th time TBD, at Libby's Bar and Grill.
2. Sherard Harrington noted that there will be a First Thursday Social from 7:00pm-9:00pm on Thursday, December 3rd at Scorpions Bar and Grill.
3. Sherard Harrington noted that there will be a Republican Debate Screening on Tuesday, December 8th, time TBD, at Libby's Bar and Grill.

E. The Graduate Student Experience at UNH.

- a) GSS had an open discussion about the graduate student experience at UNH centering on strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities, in addition to a brainstorming session on goals for future improvements.
- b) **Strengths**
 1. Faculty:
 - Proximity to faculty
 - Caring advisors and professors who have a real interest in your success.

- Close relationship with advisors that listen and care about my success
- Relationships with professors
- What they can do for their students
- Faculty are well-connected to the people in their fields and active and involved in their fields
- Programs are small so we get a lot of attention
- Professor mentorship
- Flexibility, Flexibility working across departments and with grad students
- Certain departments are strong, strong programs
- Our department requires teaching, there is a good focus on our cohort
- What individual programs do for their students

3. Specialized community

- Seacoast – Portsmouth, etc. and beautiful natural surroundings
- Part of Boston Consortium for library, in greater Boston area also means good for conferences etc.

4. Good location

5. Decentralization: Less top-down decision-making, forces community

6. Funding re: STAF awards, health insurance

7. Our health insurance here is incredible

8. Not paying student activity fee for registered student organizations

9. Professional development: amount of it, other types of workshops that the Grad School and individual departments provide for grad students.

10. The individuals who put effort to make student life better for everyone.

11. Community

12. First Thursdays – meeting others and forming community

13. Research, esp. in natural resource field – one of only universities with research owned farms – we have 5 of them

- a. Existing resources on campus, many hidden in many departments

14. Transfer of knowledge by graduate students, senior ones sharing information about things

- b. Helped a lot to have folks together Mas with PhDs etc. integration and opportunities

15. Support for conferences: funding by departments and grad school

16. Good alumni prof. development offered by grad school etc.

17. GSS exists and we have a voice on campus

- c. Grad Council

- 18. Incidentals – things that surround our academic work, e.g. RSOs, GSS, happenings and events at MUB and around UNH
- 19. Flexibility
 - d. Also in terms of designing program, being able to enont-traditional student night classes etc.
 - e. A lot of flexibility in designing our curriculums when we teach
 - f. Great that we have public transportations

c) **Weaknesses**

- 1. State funding
- 2. On-campus housing
- 3. Knowledge of resources, etc.
- 4. Predominately White Institution (PWI)
- 5. Communal spaces (social and academic)
- 6. Isolation
- 7. Lack of funding
- 8. Food options
- 9. Diversity of experiences combined with inflexible policies
- 10. Professional and career development
- 11. Decentralization: RCM, communication and governance challenges
- 12. UNH as center of scholarship (more than as individuals, e.g. hosting major conferences, building reputation)
- 13. Housing: On-campus housing options aren't great and off-campus housing is expensive in Durham
- 14. A lot of alumni bequests are going to departments in the STEM fields and funds are drying up for departments in the humanities and social sciences. Dwindling funding hurts grad students in many ways. /
- 15. The library isn't up to par with other R-1/T-1 research libraries
- 16. Sometimes graduate students opinions are overlooked when making departmental decisions. The GSS does a good job helping to incorporate our ideas into the broader UNH community but on a smaller scale I feel sometimes we get lost.
- 17. Not many people want to get involved.
- 18. Lack of communication across departments, I would love to see more collaboration on research and classes. /
- 19. Need more detailed steps of required graduate policies, ie qualifying exams, proposal presentation, thesis defense.
- 20. Integration of campuses – e.g. MBA program, law school, Manchester, etc.
 - a. Takes a lot to figure out what's going on with all of this re: coordination
- 21. Community & Coordination – within and between departments

22. Lack of sense of community and therefore sense of duty or desire – therefore who are you changing it for?
 - a. Lack of TA positions, for example – English lost them and no one told anyone about it even in dept.!
 - b. Also NRESS students was getting kicked out of building without say and really quickly
23. Lack of involvement – small group of people involved rather than more, need more people involved
24. Cost / state funding
 - a. Funding
25. Lack of governance organization at undergrad or grad level at Manchester campus
26. Student recruitment
27. Campus rec cut the GA positions, which sucked away from student recruitment in RMP program
28. Car dependence
 - a. Earliest train from Boston area comes to campus after 10am
29. Lack of composting
30. Given our region and positioning, we could be much more green!
31. Consistent and diverse offerings for undergraduate activities (therefore lots of drunk undergrads doing stupid things), activities seem fairly one-dimensional that are offered for them
32. Communications – everyone is in a 10 foot by 10 foot room and so that is one reason we don't talk to each other, the architecture contributes to this
 - a. How it restrict interaction and integration
 - b. (This is part of industrial design)
33. Interdisciplinary work, lack of people talking to each other between disciplines (communications is involved)
34. Stipends are some of the lowest in the nation, esp. compared to similar institutions with similar costs of living
35. Lack of commitment to sustainability
36. Communication
 - a. Starts at level of college to dept. to individuals including students, and when we find out it's way too late to do anything, even though this impacts our work and what we do... may have certain research that has certain requirements
 - i. This esp. happens during summer and winter as well.
 - b. More generally just told stuff will be happening that could impact us
 - i. E.g. there are things that could compromise
37. Some buildings seem like they are falling apart

- a. Water damage to someone's equipment in their lab because of roof issue and had to threaten to get anything fixed.
- 38. Communications to things like facilities maintenance or staff or faculty lists, we can't get on them without a big challenge...
 - a. Lack of notification of us for stuff when they just notify faculty instead and don't care about us doing that
- 39. Lack of accountability that we do not have
 - a. Who makes what decisions? How do these things work for processes? Where does xyz come from?
- 40. Decentralized university means that trying to figure out how to get something done or who does something can be really difficult, because we suddenly find out something is done, this can also make it harder for us to make changes
- 41. We aren't consulted when policies change even though we are required to be
- 42. Modernization: How is student sustainability and career preparation for today's job market incorporated/integrated into the academic program?
- 43. Athletics – too much focus and expanding those facilities, prioritizing this over other things because it foots us with the bill, this takes priority over academic mission of university
- 44. On campus, renovating Gables when Babcock has been in same bad state for so long, dorms is issue
- 45. Engagement of president with students
 - a. Transparency and communication and interest governance
- 46. Mark Rubinstein is gone and he used to be substantially involved
- 47. No dedicated grad student space(s)
- 48. Hot potato Accountability with bureaucracies
- 49. Regional transport
- 50. Poor grad representation at departmental meetings
- 51. Administrators get lots of money and grad students sometimes don't see themselves prioritized.

d) **Opportunities**

- 1. Comprehensive student guide
- 2. Communication between international and U.S. students
- 3. Events of interest to graduates
 - a. Opportunities to find out information
- 4. Clout and strength of GSS
- 5. Accessibility, responsiveness
- 6. Decentralization: more opportunities and avenues for making change
- 7. Recognition

8. Internships that are specifically for grad students / - Professional development / - Alumni networking events that would connect current grad students with alumni would be great. They currently have events like this that are for all UNH students, but as far as I know, they don't have any that are only open to grad students and alumni.
9. Opportunities to meet influential people of various backgrounds provide the chance to network with professionals in given fields. Seminars and courses in practical skills, for example grant writing and LSA900. / Interdepartmental cooperation. When there is a lot of communication/sharing of ideas I feel like it can make grad student life easier and more fulfilling, but when there is a lack of communication it can become challenging to accomplish certain goals.
10. Opportunities to make contacts, to be involved, to be a part of the community and feel you are important in that community.
11. More interaction at a personable level between graduate students and professors. / More inter-disciplinary research.. / More social events for graduate students
12. First year cohort and stuff tied in or something along those lines
13. Could be more oriented towards being a green campus
14. Interdisciplinary work
15. Discourse and framing

e) **Threats**

1. Lack of funds, consistency
2. Higher education funding.
 - a. State funding
 - b. The culture of UNH (e.g. athletics, undergrad focus)
3. Individual administrative policies and procedures
4. "Two-dimensional power"/transparency (e.g. do we even get to know about decisions being made that affect us and what role are we being given in terms of our consideration of those decisions)
5. The lack of funding is the greatest threat. Departments in the "STEM" fields probably aren't feeling this as much because there's more federal funding available in those areas and a lot of the major donations that UNH receives are earmarked for the sciences or business programs. However, in the humanities and social sciences, departments are forced to make major cuts. In my own department, professors have retired early to help the chair make the required budget cuts, but the department can't afford to replace them, which leads to fewer course options for grad students. Fewer course options and lower funding levels then lead to fewer grad students, which leads to even fewer

course options, and so on. Of course, this is a nationwide problem, but I agree with the GSS members who mentioned a few weeks ago that UNH tends to overlook the great work being done by grad students in many fields.

6. Red Tape. I have found it challenging to accomplish certain goals because colleges/departments are unwilling to consider alternative proposals.
7. People who aren't interested and passionate about anything are the biggest threat.
8. Lack of funding. / Lack of clear guidelines on what is required of a graduate student.

f) **Goals Brainstorm – what would bring us closer to our ideal vision?**

1. Power
 - a. Union and/or other advocacy mechanisms for graduate students
 - b. Undergraduate Student Senate changing their name to that (Adding the U)
2. Community
 - a. Interdisciplinary newsletters with current graduate student research written to be accessible for a layperson
 - b. App. to connect folks around interest issues, geography, etc.,
 - c.
3. Communications
 - a. Comprehensive information guide
 - b. A revamped GSS website
 - i. Have a comprehensive list of what's actually going on re: current events and student activities and common questions
 - c. Outreach to undergraduate student body
 - d. Reaching out to key legislators and community leaders
4. Funding support
 - a. Keeping down cost and fees
5. Fees and Auxiliary services:
 - a. TA's who don't live on campus should be allowed to file for a waiver for the campus rec fee. Currently, TA's are not allowed to apply for such a waiver, which doesn't make sense.
 - b. The student health plan should provide dental and vision benefits. It currently provides a dental discount (but no coverage) and nothing at all for vision (if I remember correctly). (Re-iterated: Dental and(/or) vision benefits)
6. Professional Development:

- a. I'd like to see Career Services expand its options for grad students. it should offer multiple workshops and programs for grad students.
 - b. Career Services could get together with the Grad School and the Alumni Association to sponsor networking events that are specifically for grad students and successful alumni.
 - c. Career planning should be much more advertised;
 - d.
7. Departmental work:
- a. Once a semester graduate student meetings within departments to discuss any issues pertaining to grad students or a suggestion box that is monitored on a regular basis.
 - b. More professional development aimed at individual departments, rather than general sessions. Professors should be more available and involved.
 - c. Need to have each department clearly identify policies for grad program and also have guidelines of requirements for work TA/RA.
8. Collaboration
- a. Research clusters – e.g. religion and society, interdisciplinary??? (graduate students and faculty coming together to come together around a specific interest) e.g. mini-conferences and collaborative communication. Opening this up beyond within one department
 - b. Partnering with other student bodies from other universities do see how they do things all across the board
 - i. More communication connecting folks that are part of the same stuff, e.g. a particular group or society, e.g. UNH and Dartmouth with NH chapter of university.
 - ii. Seeing from others what they do on some of these issues?
 - iii. Research grants.
 - c. Do we want to join the NGAPS or whatever it is group and be part of them
 - d. Reaching out to grade schools as well, showcasing UNH and partnering
 - e. Doing another event that is more inclusive of something professors could come
 - f. More transparency re: RCM with administration!
Having a central administrative fee separate from each auxiliary fee

- g. Graduate Research Conference – getting more administrators to come to that
 - i. Incorporating RSOs into the event
- h. Undergraduate student senate representation at our meeting
- i. Interdisciplinary departmental work
- j. Communication between departments
- k. Where does the state funding that we get go? Finding out where this money goes.
- l. Creating an accountability culture, there are some schools where it is set up that it is an accountability culture, e.g. you work for students, they are your boss. Students here are not thought of that way, it's basically the opposite. E.g. getting a receipt that says what my tuition pays for.
- m. Continually reach out and make the demands above...
- n. Making things more interdisciplinary and communicating between departments across departments
- o. Larger cohort thing across disciplines or something like that?

1. This discussion was brought to an end.
2. **Adjournment** – 1:35 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Rowe, Clerk
Graduate Student Senate
University of New Hampshire