

Meeting Minutes for General Meeting of UNH Graduate Student Senate
Tuesday, December 8, 2015
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
Paul Rowe	Clerk
Patrick Lacroix	Treasurer
Andrea Jilling	External Affairs Officer

B. Senators Present

Matt Smith	GRAD
Felicia Fowler	GRAD
Tom Cronin	Manchester
Drummond Biles	CEPS
Myles Lynch	COLA
Felicia Fowler	CHHS
Wade Heath	PAUL
Nathaniel Stafford	COLA
Damian Manda	CEPS
Jovana Milosavljevic	COLA
Dante Broadbent	CHHS
Kevin McMahon	LAW
Devin Batchelder	COLSA

C. Executive Committee Members/Senators Not Present:

Melika Nouri	Forest Park
Catherine Welter	COLA

D. Members at Large Present: Bonnie Barlow.

E. Guests: Associate Vice President of Community, Equity, and Diversity Jamie Nolan.

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

IV. Internal Business.

A. Meeting agenda approved. Paul Rowe would proxy vote for Catherine Welter.

B. **Jamie Nolan introduced. After GSS sent a resolution to the President's office Jamie Nolan agreed to meet with GSS to discuss President Huddleston's removal of the Bias-free Language Guide.** Nolan received hate mail throughout this time period she described as the worst week of her professional life. Nolan noted that the individuals who authored the guide provided a good service for the institution. This language guide was presented as a guide as opposed to a mandate. Faculty requested this guide to help navigate difficult classroom dialogue to determine what preferred vocabulary. Nolan noted that the guide could have been framed as a living document so that context shifts would be taken into account. Nolan expressed disappointment over leadership's response to the guide. Nolan received shocking personal hate mail from around the country calling her a fascist. There were calls received from state legislature as well. There was intense pressure on the Commission and the decision to remove the guide was not solely the President's decision. Perhaps the Commission could have put up a revised guide instead of simply removing the original.

C. **Ezra Temko asked for an update on what is currently happening in relation to the guide's removal.** Has there been further discussion on the possibility of a new or revised guide? Has there been outreach to the authors about their role since the removal of the guide? Jamie Nolan noted that she hasn't had time to talk with them yet as she has had many meetings with the Advisory Counsel, etc., noting that she needs to assemble the right people to work on the guide. How might this guide be presented as the resource it was intended to be? Faculty must have awareness training about micro-aggressions, preferred language, difficult experiences student go through, etc. The guide will have a role in the Action Plan. We will learn from our mistakes. We have preliminary data in the form of a report for the Task Force to review. We need to base our actions off recommendations we receive from our community. More people need to get involved.

1. Jovana Milosavljevic asked what steps have been made regarding faculty training.

2. Jamie Nolan noted this is a huge project. We have another group working on Title 9 issues. We have SHARPP, and services for survivors such as the Counsel of Issues of Compliance. Nothing is happening in a coordinated fashion. Training is important. Last spring, a firm looked at Title 9 efforts across the university and produced a 110-page report focusing on athletics issues and what happened at Keene State. UNH has a 10-page report based on these recommendations. We want to help and support our survivors while remaining invulnerable from a legal perspective. These are not all-or-nothing propositions. One student went through a difficult experience, asked for an escort to class, and the university is looking at a network of support to help this student receive care. This is normally SHARPP's role, but Nolan intervened and learned a lot through this

experience. Nolan recommended sensitivity training opportunities for graduate instructors. We need to work with Faculty Senate to develop obligated reporters and foster resources for survivors.

3. Patrick Lacroix noted that Nolan said the Guide went up because of a faculty demand. What have you been hearing from faculty and staff who require this resource?
4. Nolan noted that faculty was upset: specifically Sociology, Women's Studies, and Ethnic Studies faculty members. She noted she is working on encouraging faculty to interrupt people who say offensive things. Some statements don't count as free speech. Faculty created a common read to discuss race issues that people push against/see as a non-issue.
5. Bonnie Barlow noted that many senior citizens were disturbed by the latent ageism behind some of the guide's jargon. Many older individuals thought this guide was a mandate and were hurt and confused.
6. Nolan noted the guide's messages could have been clearer, but it was meant as a guide, written from a particular perspective with a particular agenda. The language of the guide was similar to other institutions and agencies. We need to problematize language, and stop and think about language and power. No one stopped to think.
7. **Ezra Temko asked about what other frames are out there. Campus reform put out one other potential framework. It seems like the same framing is coming from UNH in terms of calling it a free speech issue. In the President's statement he said "these guides and codes have no place," but guides and codes are different things. Can we reframe this? Nolan answered, "Yes. I think so."** Nolan noted that she wants to maintain a good relationship with her boss. They have different political perspectives, but he may be open to a way to reframe this language and present the guide as a tool. Universities are under attack about free speech issues and operating from a place of fear is a bad strategy. **Mike Verney thanked Nolan for revisiting this turbulent issue.**
8. **Nolan admitted that the press release was rushed.** Nolan did manage to say that the statement of the guide's removal took agency away. They could have served these individuals who authored the guide better by attempting to calm concerns without throwing people under the bus. They did not mean to silence anybody who intended to problematize language so people reconsider what they term things. Yet, they opposed the guide. There is room for improvement in terms of clarity of effort and response to these issues. Nolan noted she doesn't know the pressures of the state coming down on Huddleston.
9. Andrea Jilling asked if Nolan has been involved in community conversations. What was the turnout? Did you address the guide? Was there productivity? Nolan noted that she met with NH Listens twice in Durham, twice in Manchester, and once at the Law School. We need to balance critical thinking and critical caring, free speech and civility. **Nolan noted she would disseminate a report, send it out, and GSS could bring up for their perspective and respond. This way, voices could be heard.**
10. **Mike Verney noted that Preparing Future Faculty workshops could discuss diversity on campus, free speech, and how it relates to inclusion. That's one possible avenue for a way to proceed. Nolan noted that would be a fantastic option.** It can't just be grassroots or "from the top." These issues must be discussed everywhere in between to make a tangible impact on the community.

D. Minutes. December 1st Minutes Approved.

E. **Patrick Lacroix noted that the MLK Summit would now include graduate students.**

F. **Mike Verney discussed Governance Committee proposals.**

1. **Proposal #1. The Process for Amending GSS Constitution and Bylaws.** The current language regarding changes to GSS amendments is ambiguous. Currently the Dean of the Graduate School and President of the university has to sign off on any proposed changes because the Constitution is a charter of the university. The change to the language of amending the GSS Constitution and Bylaws would give GSS more autonomy. M. Verney noted that the Dean of the Graduate School feels that he is responsible for some of the activities of GSS and feels he should have loose oversight over some of the GSS's activities. If GSS did something crazy, he would get pressure from the Provost and President. We want to have the Graduate School's support through funding, socials, and activities. M. Verney noted it's good to move in tandem with the Graduate School. Once GSS approves this process, it's possible to restart talks about this with Dean Harry Richards. This proposal is a step towards that. Grad school does have strong feelings about having some oversight of GSS activities. Tom Cronin noted that USS is funded through the Student Activity fee. Ezra Temko noted that GSS and USS are both held accountable for their activities through university policy. There is oversight from MUB and OSIL for USS. Andrea Jilling thanked Mike Verney for his efforts to make GSS proposals more productive and efficient. A. Jilling noted that she did not think the Dean would disprove any changes to GSS bylaws if given authority over this process.

2. **Mike Verney made a motion to approve Governance Committee's Proposal #1.**

Proposed Language: Ratification: Amendments to the GSS Bylaws must be approved by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the voting membership of the GSS. The GSS Vice President shall then submit the approved changes with a brief cover letter to the Dean of the Graduate School, who has ultimate authority over all changes to the GSS Bylaws. The proposed changes will be ratified when the GSS has received either the signature of the Dean of the Graduate School or a written communication of approval from said Dean. Alternatively, the Dean of the Graduate School may also choose to allow the changes to become adopted without formal approval; if four weeks have elapsed since the date that the Dean of the Graduate School received the proposed changes with no action being taken, the changes will be ratified.

Yay, 13. Nay, 0. Abstentions, 1. Motion approved. Proposal passed.

3. **Mike Verney introduced Governance Committee's Proposal #2 allowing any Senator to tender their resignation from GSS through a letter to anyone from the Executive Committee.**
4. **Nathaniel Stafford made a motion to approve this Proposal #2.**
5. **Proposal #2 withdrawn because of a clerical error.**
6. **Mike Verney discussed Governance Committee's Proposal #3.**
7. **Mike Verney made a motion to approve Proposal #3.**

Proposed Language: Membership: All matriculated full-time and part-time degree-seeking UNH graduate students are non-voting, general members of the GSS. All those who are not general members of the GSS but are interested in attending

meetings are classified as guests. Guests may attend all public meetings of the GSS, may not vote, but may contribute to meetings according to adopted policy.

Yay, 13. Nay, 0. Abstentions, 1. Motion passed. Proposal approved.

- 8. Mike Verney brought up Proposal #4 regarding the dissolving of Ad Hoc Committees**, noting this was another question OSIL brought to the attention of GSS. It was unclear if standing committees that are mandated by GSS Bylaws have to be current every year. Some of these committees linger on for years without a mandate from GSS. Proposal #4 sets a timetable for when these ad hoc committees have to be reevaluated to see if they are worth pursuing. **This evaluation would occur at the end of the Fall semester each year.**

- 9. Mike Verney made a motion to approve Proposal #4.**

Proposed Language: Ad-hoc Committees: The GSS Executive Committee may create ad-hoc committees to address the immediate needs of the student body. The GSS Executive Committee shall develop a charge for the committee at the time of formation. By the end of the fall semester of each academic year, the Executive Committee will have reviewed the utility of all ad-hoc committees and decided if they should continue as an ad-hoc committee or if the committee should cease to exist.

Yay, 13. Nay, 0. Abstentions, 1. Motion passed.

- 10. Ezra Temko announced that department graduate student representation would be discussed at the first GSS meeting of the Spring 2016 semester.**

V. Adjournment – 1:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Rowe, Clerk
Graduate Student Senate
University of New Hampshire