

Meeting Minutes for the General Meeting of the UNH Graduate Student Senate (GSS)  
10 September 2013, MUB 233  
Ian Cohen, President, Facilitating

- I. Call to Order: Ian Cohen, President: 12:35pm
- II. Roll Call and Introductions
  - A. Executive Committee Members Present:
    1. Ian Cohen, President
    2. Joe Gilbert, Vice President
    3. Deanna Silva, Treasurer
    4. Dan Tran, Clerk
  - B. Executive Committee Members Not Present:
    1. John McClain, External Affairs Officer
  - C. Senators Present:
    1. Harrison Roakes, CEPS
    2. Surupa Shaw, CEPS
    3. Luke Dietrich, COLA
    4. Mike Verney, COLA
    5. Brianna Isenberg, COLSA
    6. Mica Kurtz, Paul College
    7. Patrick Lacroix, Babcock Hall
    8. Matt Smith, Graduate School
  - D. Senators Not Present:
    1. Thomas Cronin, Manchester
  - E. Executive Committee Members/Senators to Be Appointed:
    1. Madhav Baral, Programs Coordinator
    2. Mike Griswold, CHHS
    3. Myles Lynch, CHHS
    4. Jay Derick, COLA
    5. Kei Saito, COLA
  - F. Other Graduate Students Present: 3
- III. Guest Speaker: Cari Moorhead, Associate Dean of the Graduate School
  - A. Dean Moorhead discusses the GSS's role at UNH.
- IV. Approval of Minutes from the General Meeting on 3 September 2013
  - A. Mr. Gilbert moved to approve the minutes.
  - B. Mr. Kurtz seconded the motion.
  - C. The minutes were approved unanimously.**
- V. Initial Reports from the Executive Committee
  - A. President, Mr. Cohen
    1. Graduate Council, (with Mr. Gilbert, Mr. McClain, Ms. Isenberg)
      - a) Last year, the Graduate School took a budget cut of \$350,000, due to the cuts in state funding. As a result, scholarships for part-time students were dropped, the number of summer teaching assistantships and dissertation-year fellowships were reduced, and graduate assistants working in administration lost some of their waivers.
      - b) The Graduate School is working on making up for the loss and insulating graduate students who need all the financial help they can get from the effects of these cuts to the financial aid budget. Cuts do not affect those who had already received money.
      - c) The current academic year's incoming applicant pool was the second largest ever in the history of the Graduate School (with the largest coming from two years prior).

The acceptance and enrollment rates are consistent with recent years, but more people are expressing interest in attending the university.

- d) The UNH School of Law will officially become integrated with the university by the end of 2013. Law students will officially become part of the graduate student body. This will eventually require the creation of a GSS position.
  - e) The Graduate Council is also potentially trying to define the role of graduate education at UNH and how it is reflected in the university mission statement.
  - f) While UNH is thought of as the research university in the state, there does not seem to be as large enough of a commitment to graduate education. Decisions tend to be made with primarily undergraduate education in mind.
  - g) It was reported to the Council that turnout to first two weeks of activities was favorable (with an estimated total of about 200).
- B. Vice President, Mr. Gilbert
1. Governance Committee
    - a) The GSS Governance Committee still requires two more senators to serve. At-large members are allowed to serve but the Committee needs the senators to conduct business.
    - b) Goals include drafting language for the formation of a law school senator position as soon as it becomes integrated and addressing write-in votes during the nomination/election process.
    - c) Mr. Kurtz and Ms. Shaw tentatively agree to join the committee.
  2. New-Senator Orientation
    - a) An orientation will be held for those newly elected/appointed to their positions. This involves going over committee assignments and roles, as well as the departments that each senator represents in addition to their own.
- C. Treasurer, Ms. Silva
1. Financial Affairs Committee
    - a) Money has primarily been spent on pizza thus far, leaving the GSS with \$1,524.88 remaining to spend for the year.
    - b) \$4,200 had originally been requested, since that was the budget from 2012-13, but only \$2,200 had been granted so far.
    - c) The Financial Affairs Committee is also seeking more senators. This involves discussing how the GSS spends its money and the fee oversight process.
    - d) Damian Manda tentatively agrees to join the committee.
- D. Clerk, Mr. Tran
1. No report.
- VI. Ad Hoc, Liaison, and Other Committee Reports
- A. Campus Recreation Building Committee, Ms. Silva
1. In the two meetings in the previous week, the architects went over multiple schematics for the design of the renovated building, where buildings would be placed on the property, utilities, the pool, etc.
  2. There are currently no numbers on what each schematic would generally cost and less so on how the renovation project would affect student fees. Fees are not expected to increase until after the new facilities have been constructed.
- B. Memorial Union Building Board of Governors (MUB BOG), Mr. Smith
1. Planning is in motion for the development and building of a structure in the area in downtown Durham (most notably around where Aroma Joe's, People's United Bank, and the old Alpha Tau Omega house is currently located), which would accommodate housing, a new Interoperability Lab (IOL), and a full-sized Barnes & Noble bookstore.

2. If the new Barnes & Noble is built, then the MUB bookstore would be removed due to a non-compete agreement. The MUB would lose the revenue from the bookstore, causing the MUB fee to potentially skyrocket for students as well as decrease the MUB's ability of fund its programming.
3. The MUB would like to develop a focus group, including graduate students, to discuss high-revenue options to replace the bookstore. There are other limitations and restrictions on what could go in that space due to other non-compete agreements.

## VII. Old Business

### A. Campus Progress

1. Many students have loans to pay off that carry high interest rates (6%+). A white paper written by an organization called Campus Progress was found discussing the idea of government refinancing of existing student loans down to 5% and why it would be beneficial to both students and the economy.
2. New Hampshire has the highest student loan debt per-capita, so the GSS decided to take up the cause and draft a letter to be sent out to the state's congressional delegation over the past summer. There was no little response.
3. A meeting with one of Senator Shaheen's aides revealed that for the GSS to be able to do anything about this, it would require forming a much larger and broader coalition involving business owners, administration, students, and stakeholders from other schools in the state before forming any sort of effective grassroots campaign. This seemed to be out of the GSS's scope.
4. The general response out from both Senator Shaheen's and Senator Ayotte's offices involved explaining lower rates for new and current federal Stafford loans which is not what the original cause was concerned with in the first place.
5. Discussion: the GSS may continue pursuing the cause in other ways, for example it may be in the form of making phone calls. Would the Senate's efforts be better off towards other related issues such as tuition and costs?
6. Mr. Verney moved to table the discussion.
  - a) Mr. Lacroix seconded the motion.
  - b) The motion passed unanimously.**

## VIII. New Business

### A. Appointments of New Senators

1. Article II, Section V.1 of the GSS Bylaws states: "Any vacancy shall be filled by a special special election to be held by the affected constituency within four (4) weeks of the position being vacated. In the event that the affected constituency fails to fill the vacant position within the four (4) week limit, the GSS President shall fill the position by appointment or special election."
  - a) Jay Derick and Kei Saito were appointed COLA senators by Mr. Cohen.**
  - b) Mike Griswold and Myles Lynch were appointed CHHS senators by Mr. Cohen.**

### B. Appointments of New Executive Officers

1. Article II, Section V.2 of the GSS Bylaws states: "The GSS President may fill vacancies on the Executive Committee from the GSS representatives in the event of a mid-term vacancy. Such Presidential appointments are subject to confirmation by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) at the next GSS meeting."
  - a) Due to the resignation of the Programs Coordinator after the last election, Mr. Cohen proposed to appoint Madhav Baral as new Programs Coordinator.
    - (1) Madhav Baral is unanimously approved as the GSS Programs Coordinator.**

C. Discussion: Timely Progress Through a Graduate Program

1. Out of the last Graduate Council meeting, Dean Richards brought up issues about how students are not progressing through their respective graduate programs in a timely manner.
2. Some departments are well structured around monitoring students and forming checkpoints to ensure timely progress, while other departments do not.
3. What departments do this? If not, should they consider some sort of system to ensure that a student completes his/her degree on time? Would it be beneficial or a hindrance? Should there be punitive measures for those who fall behind?

D. Committee Assignments

1. Committee and commission assignments should be confirmed for all GSS executive officers and senators.
2. All executive offices and senators should have been put in contact with persons in charge of scheduling respective committee/commission meetings.

IX. Announcements/Notes

- A. University Day, TODAY, September 10, 3:30-6:30pm, on the Thompson Hall Lawn
- B. 2013 New England Fall Astronomy Festival, Saturday, September 14 10am-midnight, at the UNH Observatory
- C. There are upcoming events during Homecoming Weekend, October 11-13, including graduate tickets for the football game and a graduate team for the 5k race.
  1. 50 tickets are reserved for graduate students for tailgating and the football game.
  2. Volunteers are also needed to man the GSS table under the Alumni tent during tailgating.

X. Adjournment

- A. Ms. Silva moved to adjourn the meeting.
- B. Mr. Verney seconded the motion.
- C. The meeting is adjourned at 1:59pm until the next general meeting scheduled on 24 September at 12:30pm in MUB 233.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dan Tran, Clerk  
Graduate Student Senate  
University of New Hampshire