

Meeting Minutes for General Meeting of UNH Graduate Student Senate  
February 10, 2015  
Mike Verney, President, Facilitating

**I. Call to Order:** Mike Verney, President, 12:41pm

**II. Roll Call**

A. Executive Committee

Mike Verney	President
Tim Roemer	Programming
Kelly Nifong	Clerk
Mica Kurtz	Vice President
Tobi Afolayan	External Affairs (via Skype)
Madhav Baral	Treasurer

B. Senators Present

Kassie Sarr-Dietershagen	COLA
Morgan Crowley	COLSA
Matt Smith	Graduate School
Patrick LaCroix	COLA
Amanda Demmer	COLA
Amanda Sobel	Forest Park
Felicia Fowler	CHHS

C. Executive Committee Members/Senators Not Present

Myles Lynch - Excused	CHHS
Tobi Afolayan - Excused	External Affairs
Ezra Temko	COLA
Stanley Quartey	Paul
Wali Raja	UNH - Law
Alireza Ebadi	CEPS
Ian Cohen	CEPS

D. Members at Large Present: 4

E. Guests: none

F. Quorum (11 voting persons /17 filled voting positions): Achieved with 14

### III. Approval of the Minutes

- A. Motion to postpone until quorum is achieved:
  - a. Motion by Patrick LaCroix, seconded by Matt Smith.

### IV. Standing Committee Reports

- A. President - Mike Verney
  - a. none
- B. Vice President - Mica Kurtz
  - a. Student Health Benefits Program
    - i. Pushed through in the fall to change policy for leave of absence
      - 1. If you take on you lose the benefits and have to find own/new insurance
      - 2. Negative feelings across the board
      - 3. Director didn't seem to care
      - 4. Said repeatedly that issue was that on a leave of absence you are no longer a student and then no longer qualify for student benefits plan
        - a. Also mentioned that this is a trend going on across the country
      - 5. Note: medical leave of absence students are most expensive for SHBP to cover
      - 6. Discussion will continue about how to fight/alter new policy
    - ii. Member at Large (John McClain) asked if undergrads are on board?
      - 1. Mike Verney mentioned that they are aware but seem less offended.
      - 2. Mica Kurtz mentioned that the undergrads are less affected since vast majority can still qualify for parent's plans. Mentioned that he thinks they should be more concerned, but they aren't presently.
    - iii. Mike Verney mentioned this issue is important to us (Mica Kurtz & Mike Verney) because we want to look out for people who are having to take a leave of absence and then having to find a comparable/affordable plan. Also believes that it might make getting medical attention more difficult.
    - iv. Mica Kurtz mentioned that it is mainly a philosophical disagreement because if someone is on a leave of absence, they may not technically still students, but implies a desire to return to school and being a student.
    - v. Kassie Sarr-Dietershagen asked how the term "leave of absence" is being applied?
      - 1. Mica Kurtz answered that he was not sure but will find out.
    - vi. Member at Large (John McClain) asked if students who take leave of absence have already paid the full amount for the SHBP?
      - 1. Mica Kurtz answered that yes the amount if already paid but you'll get back the money you can't/didn't use.
  - b. GSS Elections
    - i. Coming up. To make things easier would like present GSS members (senators) to announce if planning on returning/running for current position. If not asking to try and find someone to nominate to fill the position.
      - 1. Tim Roemer asked how does that (nomination replacement) work for ExecComm members?

- a. Mica Kurtz answered that the previous statement was specifically for senators.
    - 2. Amanda Demmer asked if nominating someone means putting them on the ballot without their knowledge.
      - a. Mica Kurtz answered that no, the GovComm will make sure they are willing first.
    - 3. Mike Verney mentioned that the ideal is to talk to people you are around and find someone who you feel will be able to fill the roll.
    - 4. Mike Verney also noted that ExecComm will all be leaving/not re-running for office next year.
  - ii. Nomination process starts Feb 24th
  - iii. Voting starts March 10
- C. External Affairs- Tobi Afolayen
  - a. Board of Trustees (BOT) Meeting
    - i. Academic affairs meeting was centered on better ways to measure student achievement and experience.
      - 1. Brought up grad students and mentioned the upcoming effort for determining which auxiliary units grad students use.
      - 2. Talked about the survey for graduate students with Ted Dare. There was interest showed.
    - ii. Financial Affairs
      - 1. Presented our process on voting on fees (the two votes and the purpose behind them).
      - 2. Mica Kurtz mentioned that the presentation focused on the vote on Campus Rec fee followed by interest in survey on getting information on how graduate students use campus rec.
        - a. Committee seemed interested and wanted to keep in touch about results of the survey.
        - b. Thinks it is a good opportunity for GSS to express our opinion and back it up with numbers.
    - iii. Member at Large (John McClain) asked if they nominated/voted for Mark Rubenstein for president of Granite State College at the meetings.
      - 1. Tobi Afolayen answered that yes, that is moving forward.
    - iv. Tim Roemer asked if there was any specific reason UNH is undergoing so much change in the administration?
      - 1. Tobi Afolayen answered that no it seemed to be a coincidence that it is all happening now.
- D. Treasurer - Madhav Baral
  - a. We have spent about half our budget for the first half of the year, therefore are in good shape for the rest of the year.
- E. Programming Committee - Tim Roemer
  - a. Dinner and a movie co-sponsored with graduate school happened on Jan 29th.
    - i. 50 registration spots - 46 attended dinner (paid for by grad school) 25 attended movie (Dear White People at the MUB)
  - b. First Thursday - ordered 9 pizzas total, more than originally planned.
  - c. Graduate Student Appreciation Week - aligned with the GRC
    - i. Monday (April 13) = commuter services (8-10am) breakfast with grad ID
    - ii. Tuesday (April 14) = GRC oral presentation
    - iii. Wednesday (April 15) = GRC posters

- iv. Thursday (April 16) = GSS spring fling
- v. Friday (April 17) = possible event with grad school at libby's

## V. Ad-hoc Committees

- A. Grad Council - Mike Verney - Met Dec 15 and Feb 3
  - a. Dec 15
    - i. Dean Richards attended a Council of Graduate Schools
      - 1. Grad student enrollment down at all of the participating graduate schools
    - ii. Jan Nisbet, Senior Vice Provost for Research, 2-12- Carnegie Foundation Data, lists UNH on the line between "Research High" and Research Very High"
      - 1. Measures research productivity
      - 2. Thought to put UNH securely in "Research Very High" is to hire more research staff
    - iii. Interested in two resolutions, on dealing with Shuttle service
      - 1. Asked about more data, will forthcoming (from the survey on record)
  - b. Feb 3
    - i. Application data
      - 1. Increase in Spring applications
      - 2. Decrease in Fall 2015 applications
      - 3. Faster graduation rates = lower enrollment
      - 4. Grad population will be below 2,000 next Academic Year
    - ii. Approved a 1 yr MS in Analytics program
      - 1. Tracks in business and health analytics
    - iii. Resolution AY2014/2015:4 regarding fee waiver radius
      - 1. Interest in seeing this move forward (one thought is no mandatory fees for PhD candidates)
      - 2. History is that nearly got accomplished, then undergrad enrollment tanked and UNH couldn't afford it
  - c. Member at Large (Damian Manda) asked if there are specific reasons national graduate student enrollment is decreasing?
    - i. Mike Verney answered that yes there are several possible.
    - ii. Amanda Sobel commented that pricing is an issue. Online options are cheaper and are a big competition.
    - iii. Mike Verney commented that it seems to be a trend for graduate students to want combined on-campus and online classes.
  - d. Member at Large (John McClain) asked if there was there a focus on specific programs seeing decreases?
    - i. Mike Verney answered it was not really discussed at the meeting, but all the data is available for analysis.
  - e. Member at Large (John McClain) asked when talking about research did they specifically say "staff" and not "faculty"?
    - i. Mike Verney answered that yes, it seems that postdocs and other research staff would help increase the research per capita for how it is measured/analyzed.
  - f. Member at Large (Ryan Lawrence) asked if there isn't some issue with how the per capita is classified? Asked what model are they using to classify the different research positions.
    - i. Mica Kurtz answered that the discussion wasn't focused on the technicalities of how things were measured. The goal is to put UNH solidly in the "very high", eliminating the "how things are measured" issue.

- ii. Amanda Sobel commented that the system is used for all the schools. The hope behind the classifications is to help bring more students in.
  - g. Tim Roemer asked if there is a monetary benefit for getting a “very high” label.
    - i. Mike Verney answered that he doesn’t believe so, and believes it is more for branding and advertising.
- B. Library Information Access Group - Mike Verney - met Jan 23
  - a. Charge by the Provost to determine
    - i. Information access
    - ii. The role of the branch libraries
    - iii. Collections and services in view of online revolution and migration from print to digital
    - iv. Use of library spaces, especially with Kendall closing.
  - b. Note that the library is dealing with limited resources and increasing students
  - c. Some focus on STEM students
  - d. Start thinking about what services you use/would like to see (for Feb 24th meeting with Bill Ross)
- C. Online Evaluations (course evals) - Mica Kurtz
  - a. rolled out in fall for just a small number of faculty
  - b. seems to work well, though with a slightly lower response record
- D. SARC - Patrick LaCroix
  - a. Cancelled in Dec, Jan, and Feb.
  - b. In part due to Chris Clement settling into new position
- E. MUB-BOG - Damian Manda
  - a. Damian Manda is no longer available to attend the MUB-BOG meetings so a new representative for GSS is needed
- F. Honorary Degree and Granite State Awards committee
  - a. Recommendations made to president
  - b. Nothing more to share since it is a private process.
- G. Library Dean Search Committee - Amanda Demmer
  - a. Still in process
  - b. Dr. Tara Fulton’s candidate visit postponed due to Juno
    - i. Rescheduled to Tuesday Feb 24, 930-1030am (LIB 352)
    - ii. RSVP with Amanda Demmer if interested in meeting with the candidate
- H. Committee for Disability, Diversity, and Equity - Felicia Fowler
  - a. Small meeting due to snow
  - b. Discussed retreat in Dec
  - c. a lot of marketing discussion
    - i. Mica Kurtz asked which students the marketing was for.
    - ii. Felicia Fowler answered that she was not sure since the notes were from the retreat, but will be getting those.
    - iii. Mica Kurtz mentioned that it was his experience is that you need to make a distinction between undergrads and graduates.
- I. UCAPC - Morgan Crowley
  - a. Voted to approve the dual major in sustainability after more details were provided by Vasu regarding the program’s funding source, the role and source of tenure track professors, and credibility and evaluations for dual major programs.
  - b. Third vote for this, was voted down in order to get more information
  - c. Next vote will be for the Faculty Senate at large to vote on this dual-major.
  - d. This only applies to undergraduates.

## VI. Old Business

- A. Approval of Minutes (Dec 2)
  - a. Motion by Tim Roemer, seconded by Mica Kurtz
    - i. Yea: 13 (two proxy Ian Cohen & Tobi Afolayan via text, Ezra Temko via email),  
Nay: 0, Abstaining: 0

## VII. New Business

- A. Resolution AY2014-2015:4 (read by Kelly Nifong, see attached)
  - a. Motion to approve
    - i. Motion by Tim Roemer, seconded by Amanda Demmer
  - b. Discussion
    - i. Mike Verney - initial discussion was with grad council
    - ii. There is interest in reassessing this in order to provide incentives to doctoral candidates to get to candidacy sooner and then finish on time
      - 1. One thought is to get rid of all fees for doctoral candidates when reaching candidacy
    - iii. Going to continue the discussion with grad council
    - iv. Member at Large (Taylor Hodgden) asked if is this only for PhD students or all grad students
      - 1. Mike Verney answered that yes, this only applies to PhD students
    - v. Mica Kurtz mentioned that one issue is that PhD candidates are relatively small population of graduate students. If we jump on with grad council to abolish then we are then only talking about candidates. Think we could make this broader we can then affect more graduate students.
    - vi. Patrick LaCroix asked if we know how many students would be affected by this?
      - 1. Mike Verney answered that Dean Richards will be looking into that information.
    - vii. Member at Large (John McClain) asked if this is would require the full university signing off on this waiver, and not just the graduate school signing off on it.
      - 1. Mike Verney answered that it probably will have to go to BOT eventually, but will have to go through the university administration to get there
    - viii. Amanda Sobel asked if there is a specific way that the 50 miles is determined?
      - 1. Mica Kurtz answered that yes, when the waivers are submitted then someone sits down with the addresses and figures that out looking at driving routes.
    - ix. Kassie Sarr-Dietershagen asked if is there a way to pay for only 1 service instead of all?
      - 1. Mike Verney answered that it seems to be an all or nothing.
  - c. Motion to table resolution for further discussion
    - i. Motion by Kassie Sarr-Dietershagen, seconded by Tim Roemer
- B. Resolution AY2014-2015:5 (summarized by Mike Verney, see attached)
  - a. Motion to approve
    - i. Motion by Mica Kurtz, seconded by Patrick LaCroix
  - b. Discussion
    - i. Patrick LaCroix mentioned that the issue with having our concerns heard in Concord, is what needs to be done in order to accomplish this (restoring USNH funding), including figuring out where the money would come from, possibly being another agency.
      - 1. Mica Kurtz mentioned that one thing to consider is that tax receipts are increasing from the recession so there is slightly more money available

so less cuts are necessary. So it may be the case that no money needs to be cut from other sources to return USNH funding to requested funds.

- ii. Member at Large (Ryan Lawrence) asked if there is any global/economic trend to maybe encourage Concord to do this or be hesitant about this?
  - 1. Mica Kurtz answered that Concord will likely to be hesitant to increase funding anywhere, no matter what global/national economic trends are occurring.
- iii. Motion to table resolution for further discussion
  - 1. Motion by Mica Kurtz, seconded by Amanda Sobel
- C. Tim Roemer - would like to see a better definition of various GA responsibilities
  - a. Curious about what specific responsibilities are and how to know when they are being abused.

**VIII. Adjournment - 2:02pm**

- A. Motion by Patrick LaCroix, seconded by Matt Smith.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Nifong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelly Nifong, Clerk  
Graduate Student Senate  
University of New Hampshire

University of New Hampshire Graduate Student Senate  
Resolution AY2014-2015:4  
February 6, 2015

A Resolution Regarding the Requirements for Waiving Graduate Mandatory Fees  
Sponsored by: Ian Cohen, CEPS Senator & Michael Kurtz, Vice President

WHEREAS, the mandatory fees assessed to graduate students at the University of New Hampshire currently total \$1,788.00 for the 2014/2015 Academic Year; and

WHEREAS, those mandatory fees include Health Services, Campus Recreation, Memorial Union Building, Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program (SHARPP), Transportation Services, Counseling Center, and Technology; and

WHEREAS, almost all of the mandatory fees supplement the budget of campus-based services and amenities in Durham; and

WHEREAS, graduate students at the Manchester and Concord campuses pay different fees assessed for those campuses; and

WHEREAS, current policy states that doctoral students at candidacy are only qualified to petition for the waiver of mandatory fees if the student “recently relocated and/or permanently resides out of the immediate geographic area (50 miles) prior to the beginning of classes.”

WHEREAS, students living more than 30 miles from campus are unlikely to utilize the on-campus facilities covered by the mandatory fees because of preference for other alternatives closer to their place of residence; and

Therefore, BE IT RESOLVED that the University of New Hampshire Graduate Student Senate strongly encourages that the radius used to define “the immediate geographic area” when regarding waivers for mandatory fees be reduced from 50 miles to 30 miles.

University of New Hampshire Graduate Student Senate  
Resolution AY2014-2015:5  
February 6, 2015

A Resolution Supporting the USNH Biennial Budget Request for FY16-17  
Sponsored by: Ian Cohen, CEPS Senator

WHEREAS, the University System of New Hampshire (USNH), composed of the University of New Hampshire, Plymouth State University, Keene State College, and Granite State College, graduates over 6,500 people into the New Hampshire workforce each year and contributes more than \$2 billion into the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, the state appropriation for USNH was cut by 49 percent for FY2012; and

WHEREAS, the budget request from USNH for the FY2014/2015 biennium promised to freeze tuition for in-state students in return for restoration of funding to the FY2011 level; and

WHEREAS, the state appropriation for USNH's operating budget was \$69 million and \$84 million for FY2014 and FY2015, respectively; and

WHEREAS, the USNH Board of Trustees committed to that tuition freeze despite only partial restoration of FY2011 funding levels; and

WHEREAS, despite the reduction in state appropriation in FY2012 and FY2013, USNH continued to fund financial aid at FY2011 levels to minimize the direct impact on New Hampshire students; and

WHEREAS, USNH expenses are about 25% lower than the regional average and about half as much as NH private nonprofit colleges; and

WHEREAS, USNH receives only 7 percent of its operating budget from the state- the lowest level of support per capita in the nation; and

WHEREAS, USNH students graduate with one of the highest debt loads in the country and the price of attendance at USNH institutions is far greater than it would be if the state met its obligation to properly fund public higher education; and

WHEREAS, New Hampshire's public colleges and universities struggle to retain the state's best and brightest high school graduates in the state because they can often go to other states' schools or private institutions at less cost after scholarships are factored in; and

WHEREAS, the USNH Board of Trustees approved a Biennial Budget Request for Fiscal Years 2015-2016, requesting \$100 million for FY2016 and \$105 million for FY2017; and

WHEREAS, the USNH Board of Trustees has committed that any increases over the current appropriate level would be targeted toward enacting another two-year freeze on in-state tuition, lowering net tuition for students focusing on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)-related majors of study, and lowering net tuition for community college transfer-students in targeted workforce programs,

Therefore, BE IT RESOLVED that the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) at UNH commends the University System of New Hampshire for its efficiency and effectiveness in supplying high-quality education to the students of New Hampshire, despite the lowest state support per capita in the nation; and

Be it FURTHER RESOLVED that the GSS of the University of New Hampshire implore both Houses of the New Hampshire State Legislature to approve the Biennial Budget Request for FY2015-2016 as submitted by the University System of New Hampshire.