

Meeting Minutes for General Meeting of UNH Graduate Student Senate  
September 22, 2015  
Ezra Temko, President, Facilitating

**I. Call to Order:** Ezra Temko, President, 12:17

**II. Roll Call**

A. Executive Committee

Ezra Temko	President
Mike Verney	Vice President
Paul Rowe	Clerk
Sherard Harrington	Programs Coordinator
Patrick Lacroix	Treasurer

B. Senators Present

Matt Smith	GRAD
Drummond Biles	CEPS
Myles Lynch	COLA
Felicia Fowler	CHHS
Mary Grace Elliot	COLA
Wade Heath	PAUL
Dante Broadbent	CHHS
Taylor Hodgdon	CEPS
Damian Manda	CEPS
Jovana Milosavljevic	COLA
Devin Batchelder	COLSA
Catherine Welter	COLA

C. Executive Committee Members/Senators Not Present

Andrea Jilling	External Affairs Officer
Tom Cronin	Manchester

- D. Members at Large Present: Women's Commission Liaison Elizabeth Moschella, Amanda Sobel, USNH Trustee Lincoln Crutchfield, and Nathaniel Stafford.
- E. Guests: Joan Cannon of the Climate Reality Project, Alicia Medros & Daniel Carchidi of Academic Technology & UNH Online.

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

- A. President Ezra Temko greeted GSS members and thanked all of those members who have met with their constituents. Ezra Temko explained that he would go through the meeting's agenda, beginning with Check-Ins, and asked if anyone had special circumstances, outside reason for their attendance, requirement for leaving the meeting early, or had anything urgent to report on briefly before Introductions. Ezra Temko noted that GSS members would have the opportunity to share one "word of mouth" tip for graduate students that would be beneficial to know. Ezra Temko introduced guests. Joan Cannon indicated that she would like to speak early. Ezra Temko introduced Joan Cannon of the Climate Reality Project.
- B. Joan Cannon, UNH Campaign Organizer of the Climate Reality Project, introduced herself, and described the Climate Reality Project as a non-profit environmental organization running a campaign to mobilize support for climate talk and the global commitment to cut green house gas emissions. Joan Cannon announced that this organization is hosting an event on Oct. 2 involving many other student and community organizations, called Know Tomorrow, hosted by the Student Environmental Action Commission. Joan Cannon advised anyone to contact her if they would like a table at this event featuring free food, live music, and games, among presentations addressing the awareness of climate change.
- C. **Graduate Student Tips:** GSS Senators, Executive Committee members, and members at large introduced themselves and provided tips for incoming graduate students.
  1. Tip: The Car Pool Pass is available from the Public Transportation system. GA pass or Commuter Pass is required. Two people can obtain Car Pool Passes and both of their passes must be visible through the windshield of the vehicle. Benefits of these passes were described, including opportunities for finding better parking spaces.
  2. Felicia Fowler indicated she would serve as proxy for Devin Batchelder, as Devin would be leaving the meeting early.
  3. Tip: Elizabeth Moschella introduced herself as new Liaison for Women's Commission and indicated that the Dimond Library IT staff are valuable resources and skilled at fixing computers.
  4. Tip: Devin Batchelder advised graduate students to eat interesting and varied lunches.
  5. Tip: Daniel Carchidi of Academic Technology advised graduate Teaching Assistants that Academic Technology provides them training for BlackBoard courses, and brought up Open Educational Resources: teaching, learning, and research resources including textbooks released under an open license that permits their free use and repurposing by others.
  6. Tip: Damian Manda indicated that travel reimbursement and funding for conferences is available both from specific departments and from the UNH graduate school website under "Travel Grant Request."
  7. Tip: Mary Grace Elliot advised graduate students looking for parking in A Lot from 9:00-12:00 to come earlier, specifically around 8:00am.
  8. Tip: Catherine Welter provided parking insight, indicating that after years of experience, and many parking tickets, she now parks at West Edge and rides the shuttle bus from there.
  9. Tip: Amanda Sobel noted that graduate students should try paid parking lots near UNH campus buildings. Amanda Sobel advised graduate students to explore the towns surrounding Durham, indicating that there are excellent cafes for increasing productivity outside of the confines of Durham: Explore.
  10. Tip: Taylor Hodgdon offered that MUB movies are free this year. Graduate students should take advantage of these perks.
  11. Tip: Felicia Fowler advised graduate students to attend Outdoor Adventures trips.

12. Tip: Drummond Biles advised graduate students to get to know the administrative assistants at their respective departments, and indicated that this will make their lives much easier.
13. Tip: Matt Smith offered that UNH graduate students interested in outdoor gear receive a 15% discount from EMS.
14. Tip: Mike Verney offered that graduate students are eligible to receive discounted business cards at UNH Printing Services.

#### IV. Outside Business

- A. President Ezra Temko thanked participants in U-Day, Grad Resource Fair, and Committee meetings. Ezra Temko introduced Academic Technology representative and Associate Director Daniel Carchidi and Alicia Medros.
- B. Associate Director of Academic Technology Daniel Carchidi announced that he would give a brief overview of the **transition process from BlackBoard to Canvas**. Daniel Carchidi announced that he and Alicia Medros are meeting with Deans about this process although other members of Academic Technology are acclimating faculty and students to the new Canvas model.
- C. Daniel Carchidi explained how the decision was reached to switch from BlackBoard to Canvas technology. The yearlong process involved input from faculty and students. All of this feedback factored into the final decision to switch to Canvas.
- D. Daniel Carchidi discussed generally positive feedback for Canvas: easier, intuitive, allowed faculty to focus on instruction, consistent, and mobile. A major factor in the decision was that faculty sought a platform that could go mobile.
- E. Daniel Carchidi stated that the goal for total migration from BlackBoard to Canvas is the end of May 2016. BlackBoard will filter out at the end of June.
- F. Alicia Medros differentiated BlackBoard from other campus tools such as Wildcats Email and Webcat Services, indicating BlackBoard's function as a platform for linking campus resources.
- G. Alicia Medros announced that a Portal review project is taking place, and stated that BlackBoard may be up for approximately one more year to access various accounts such as Wildcats Email and Cat's Cash, and would be replaced by an overall Portal after that interim period.
- H. Daniel Carchidi stressed the importance of the switch, and the support that faculty needs during this transition phase, indicating a twofold support system.
  1. Support provided directly from instruction from the parent company online. Any time a faculty member or student has a question, they can get it answered. Documentation from instruction is very excellent, clear, and informative. When faculty or students enter a course they can view a "Help Module." They can link out, open a chat window, and ask a question.
  2. Support provided by weekly consultation sessions: pilot group of technicians helping to convert courses who form a community of peer sharing sessions. These are technical but also instructional. These groups work with the instructional designer from the team. Support can be scalable. These sessions are bringing on new team members. One of these members will be a resident on the Manchester campus.
- I. Daniel Carchidi began a visual presentation.
- J. The timeline of the BlackBoard to Canvas transition was displayed, indicating periods of targeted training.
  1. Pilot: Summer 2015
  2. Wave I: October 2015 - January 2016
  3. Wave II: January 2016 – May 2016 (end of May)
- K. Wave I. J Term Wave: Daniel Carchidi explained that January training sessions will be taught by 80% COLA staff. This is part of a larger attempt to align waves of colleges with the terms where

their teaching will be concentrated. A bar graph was shown depicting COLA, CEPS, Manchester, and Law together for January training. COLA and CEPS personnel will be trained then so that they will be ready to use Canvas by the time they teach for J Term. Manchester and Law personnel were grouped in here as well based on numbers.

- L. Wave II. Training will focus on COLSA, CHHS, and Paul personnel. Special in-college trained will be offered for departments. Daniel Carchidi asked if there were any questions.
1. Mary Grace Elliot pointed out that the First wave includes a lot of COLA staff members in October, and asked if that means that COLA instructors teaching during that time period would lose access to their courses on “My Courses” halfway through the semester.
  2. Sherard Harrington asked if Mary Grace Elliot meant her online course access. Mary Grace Elliot indicated that was what she meant.
  3. Drummond Biles asked if instructors would be able to build their courses online for the Spring semester while teaching in the Fall.
    - a) Daniel Carchidi indicated that the process would not be easy but if they begin training during Wave I and start to make changes for one or two courses there, it will become easier. Daniel Carchidi indicated that what appears in BlackBoard varies by instructor. Some have just a few pages, and others have a lot of embedded materials and files. There will be intensive support available for these people. Daniel Carchidi stated that we are all in this together: faculty, students, and technical support.
  4. Drummond Biles asked if his course problems will be addressed by Help Desk.
    - a) Alicia Medros explained that over 5,000 trained individuals support 60-70 different systems; otherwise, individuals should seek help from My Team. Alicia Medros stated that in addition to on-campus support there is 24/7 support from specialists.
  5. Ezra Temko asked how campus organizations fit into the Canvas model.
    - a) Alicia Medros explained these would be managed from “My Courses” on Canvas, but overall were being encouraged to use other UNH systems. Unlike BlackBoard, there is no separate location for organizations. In terms of transferring files, Alicia Medros indicated that they would reach out to Organization leaders to help them migrate to Share Point and Box.
  6. Drummond Biles announced that Box doesn’t function properly on Linux systems.
    - a) Alicia Medros indicated that she would look into this problem, obtain the information, get back to GSS, and help navigate anyone struggling with Box.
  7. Mike Verney asked if this would impact Student Evaluations.
    - b) Alicia Medros explained that the switch to Canvas will not impact Student Evaluations as this is a separate online form.
    - c) Mike Verney explained that as some graduate students only have the opportunity to teach once a semester it is important to make sure this link runs smoothly, indicated that this is very important for graduate students seeking to pursue an academic career.
  8. Catherine Welter explained that many instructors use an archive-grading tool for storing grades for several classes, and asked if she should print this out if she can’t access it anymore.

- a) Alicia Medros explained that although instructors can archive their BlackBoard courses, grading is a bit trickier. Grades should be archived and then re-submitted.
9. Drummond Biles asked if the interface looks similar to BlackBoard.
- a) Alicia Medros indicated that the Portal project will have different links that you need to use depending on your status, grad school, etc.
10. Daniel Carchidi announced that self-directed support is available now for faculty looking to begin training. College cohort sessions can begin communication to faculty, communicate a roll out plan with available support, and provide a timeline. Daniel Carchidi explained that the Pilot group is excited to share experiences that worked well or didn't work. The Pilot group will have regular updates, as well as a blog area with useful information that can cascade down to constituents represented by the GSS. Daniel Carchidi indicated that the blog is an effective feedback mechanism and lets the Pilot group know what needs to be changed.
- b) Daniel Carchidi indicated that they have met, or will meet, with Deans, Faculty Senate, IT Committee, Grad Council, Undergraduate Student Senate, Academic Affairs Committee, Graduate Student Senate, Executive Committees, Faculty meetings, College Department Chairs, Administrative assistants, ATLS, and general faculty members.
  - c) Daniel Carchidi informed GSS that English instructors were pleased to learn that Canvas allows easy, dynamic updates of its Calendar, which makes setting up teacher-student conferences a quick and painless ordeal.
  - d) Daniel Carchidi indicated that others were emotional about transferring their embedded files. Daniel Carchidi announced his belief that these issues will be solved through open forums campus-wide, and re-iterated that UNH is in this together, and Academic Technology is eager to answer any questions.
  - e) Patrick Lacroix asked what the rationale was for getting rid of BlackBoard in the first place.
  - f) Daniel Carchidi indicated that in terms of market shares, BlackBoard is still the leader, but fading, and that Academic Technology never had one single one reason for the switch but we took into account other companies with click-ability, and easy-to-use formats. Overall, we had good experiences with Canvas. BB for the most part had grown as an organization, acquired other companies, and this is not always the best way to improve effective software. Daniel Carchidi stated that Canvas looks nothing like BB and has lot of features: mobile friendly, looks the same across every device, compatibility on all browsers unlike BB, is a lot newer, is coded in recent language, and is designed for the future. Students in particular were sold on the color-coded Calendar based on due dates. Calendar feed is a feature that links the Canvas Calendar to Google Calendar.
  - g) Mary Grace Elliot commented that she has used Canvas and it is a great tool. Alicia Medros: It is a student-centered environment that crosses out assignments that students have completed.

- h) Mike Verney asked if instructors have to give out due dates on the Calendar. Alicia Medros answered that it is your option as an instructor.
- i) Mary Grace Elliot asked whether or not students could insert the due dates themselves. Alicia Medros answered that when instructors insert the due dates the syllabus is built for them, and they can attach documents in the Calendar as well. These are the things that students need and the tools instructors should use.
- j) Mike Verney asked about uploading grades. Alicia Medros answered that they know that undergraduate students completed a survey last year that indicated that the “Grades” function on Canvas was more effective and natural than the current system.

## **V. Internal Business**

### **A. Minutes**

- a. Ezra Temko asked for a process vote to approve GSS minutes for 5 May 2015.
  - 1) 5 May 2015 Minutes Approved.
- b. Ezra Temko asked for a process vote to approve GSS minutes for 8 September 2015.
  - 1) 8 September 2015 Minutes Approved.

### **B. Reports**

- a. Ezra Temko reported that External Affairs Officer Andrea Jilling is out of the country. Ezra Temko announced that Primaries are tentatively scheduled for Feb 9<sup>th</sup>, and that GSS is putting together a document about candidates, and reaching out to students as the primaries approach. External affairs: Innovation Expo will highlight UNH researchers. Published Spark magazine highlights research at UNH advocacy effort. There will be a meeting about voter registration on Friday from 2:30 -3:30.
- b. Mary Grace Elliot noted that individuals who live in New Hampshire who claim residency in a different state might still officially vote in New Hampshire by claiming domicile.
- c. Ezra Temko stated that anyone interested in getting involved with election activities should let him know.
- d. Mike Verney discussed TA-ships. There are murky expectations for what Teaching Assistant responsibilities entail. There have been controversies in the past surrounding Lab duties over break and/or academic holidays. Mike Verney indicated that Teaching Assistants have been confused about who to contact when or if they are feeling overused, working over 20 hours per week, or their advisor is asking them to complete work that is unrelated to their tasks as a Teaching Assistant. Mike Verney and Ezra Temko have met with Deans about this concerning issue. The Graduate School is currently drawing up a General Graduate Assistant Handbook meant to serve as a guide for questions surrounding Assistantships. Mike Verney also indicated that the Graduate School is creating template handbooks for graduate programs across campus to the purpose of ensuring all programs have a guide for students to get through these programs.
- e. Mike Verney indicated that graduate program coordinators might pass down policies, advise within each program. Mike Verney indicated that there has been thought towards preparing faculty/professional workshops.
  - 1) Myles Lynch asked if this was currently an ongoing process.

- 2) Mike Verney answered that the Executive Committee will speak with Cari Moorhead.
- 3) Ezra Temko stated he would update Senators on this issue.

### C. Current Issues

- a. **UNH Classified Ads:** Ezra Temko brought up that the Classified Ads were removed from the UNH website, reminded GSS that this issue popped up on the English Graduate Organization's Facebook page, and turned the floor over to Mary Grace Elliot.
  - 1) Mary Grace Elliot stated that a colleague of hers with children in the English department depended on the Classified Ads to find undergraduate students willing to babysit. Now that the Classified Ads have been removed, this colleague posted the job opportunity on Facebook, yet less people seem to check Facebook for job opportunities. Mary Grace Elliot pointed out that as UNH doesn't provide childcare, the Classified Ads were the only real avenue for finding child services and help/supervision, and now they are gone.
  - 2) Damian Manda asked whether or not there were any other alternatives.
  - 3) Mary Grace Elliot brought up the point that it is much safer to ask an undergraduate student of the UNH community to watch children than to go through a website such as Craigslist.
  - 4) Myles Lynch suggested using Pair.com as a resource.
  - 5) Felicia Fowler recommended the Wildcat Career website.
  - 6) Ezra Temko mentioned that the two closest resources to the Classified Ads are Career Service job postings, and the classifieds through TNH. Ezra Temko noted it would be beneficial to link these resources if they were going to be used instead.
  - 7) Mary Grace Elliot asked whether or not GSS has ever dealt with childcare issues.
  - 8) Ezra Temko noted that GSS has dealt with this issue through Women's Commission and childcare resources on the UNH website. Ezra Temko noted that the Women's Commission is bringing this issue up at their first meeting in early October. Ezra Temko asked if anyone had any recommendation for the role GSS can play in this issue. Ezra Temko asked if anyone had any ideas for GSS to push for another link to another service.
  - 9) Taylor Hodgdon suggested that a group could be created.
  - 10) Mary Grace Elliot noted that this would have to be something that undergraduate students could find.
  - 11) Ezra Temko asked if it cost any extra money or bandwidth to keep the Classified Ads online, suggested the possibility of reinstatement.
  - 12) Mary Grace Elliot asked if entities outside of UNH deemed the Classified Ads inappropriate.
  - 13) Elizabeth Moschella asked if there was a way to approve a post on the Classified Ads before an administrator approves the post, and asked whether or not an administrator could somehow manage posts beforehand and then approve or disprove them.
  - 14) Mike Verney suggested that instead of an administrator there might be a system where people could complain about specific ads. In this sense, an administrator wouldn't have to be hired, but if there was a place to post grievances, ads could potentially be removed. Mike Verney noted that he sees no reason why UNH shouldn't pursue Childcare Services on campus this year. Mike Verney suggested this service could be roped into Child Care,

Child Education, Family Studies, and internships, etc. Mike Verney suggested that GSS should investigate, meet with officials in a smaller group, and articulate communal interest.

15) Ezra Temko stated he would reach out to authorities on this issue, informing them that graduate students use this site as an invaluable resource, inquire as to why this page was taken down, and what possible opportunities there are to move forward on this issue. Ezra Temko stated he would have information for GSS and Women's Commission at the next GSS meeting.

- b. **Center for Global, Race, and Diversity Studies:** Ezra Temko stated he attended the meeting with COLA Dean Fuld about the managing director position. oStem, Stonewall Graduates, and the Diversity Support Coalition were also represented. Dean Fuld said the position would not be funded. People may pursue funding outside of COLA at the larger university level. One area of complaint expressed at the meeting was that there had been a long-term commitment made and by faculty and staff to create and support the work the Center for Global, Race, and Diversity Studies. Area minors may end up being supported by departments, but the programming/events and interdisciplinary minors will not be received support from the now unstaffed Center.
- c. Ezra Temko stated that GSS would be reviewing the **Student Rights, Rules, & Responsibilities handbook**. Ezra Temko brought up the fact that GSS cannot advertise events where alcohol may be present, indicating support from Ted Kirkpatrick for addressing this issue. Ezra Temko suggested that anyone contact GSS if they are interested in joining a working group to address this issue.
- d. Ezra Temko tabled the remaining issues on the agenda until next meeting. Ezra Temko stated that Deans Cari Moorhead and Harry J. Richards would attend the next GSS meeting.

**X. Adjournment** – 1:35 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Rowe, Clerk  
Graduate Student Senate  
University of New Hampshire