

## **GSO Sixth Regular Business Meeting February 29, 2012**

### **I. Call to Order**

Patrick Neary called the meeting to order at 4:33pm

### **II. Roll Call**

Motion to accept sign in sheet made, seconded, and carried.

### **III. Reading and Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes**

### **IV. Executive Report**

#### **a. GAs and Taxes/Employment Contracts**

At the last grad council meeting, it was discussed that it has come to the attention of the university that positions are eligible to be considered as taxable for both tuition as well as employee wages. The Dean of the Graduate School is making sure that students are not asked to pay for tax on their tuition.

#### **b. Officer Elections**

Elections are held at the April meeting for Eboard members, University Senators, and Senators at Large. Melissa Welshans will not be seeking re-election, so the GSO will need to elect another president; Jack will also not seek to return to his position, so the GSO will also need to elect a new comptroller.

#### **c. Library**

A new position was created: Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Operations. This position is basically in charge of overseeing a number of offices, taking those units under its wing to increase efficiency and to ensure that resources are being managed appropriately. There is a concern that this position takes academic power away from the library, rendering it more like a support unit than an academic unit. There will likely be debate about this in the next University Senate meeting and the GSO is planning to have a hand in those conversations.

### **V. Special Committee Reports**

#### **a. NAGPS NE Regional Conference Coordinating Committee (Brandon Milonovich)**

The conference will be held April 20-22

Several schools from the northeast will be represented

There are two open positions for the regional board:

Regional Director of Outreach: in charge of recruiting other new schools; intensive but rewarding

Regional Director of Employment Concerns

NAGPS discounts: a big benefit of belonging to the NAGPS. A poster is being made, but all of these discounts can be found on the website as well.

Some notable ones: discount to the Chronicle of Higher Education; Geico; extended health education after graduation, and more.

#### **b. University Senate LGBT Committee (Emma Brodeur)**

The committee will be submitting its annual report which will demonstrate what they

have accomplished. As the only graduate student on this University Senate committee, Emma is pushing for a certificate in LGBT studies and would like to measure the interest among GSO members and whether the GSO at large would offer its stamp of approval.

Emma motions to have the GSO officially support this certificate so that she can bring that to bear in pursuing its creation.

A motion to officially back the measure is made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

## **VI. Standing Committee Reports**

### **a. Finance Committee (Jack Mayernik)**

#### **i. Special Programming Request - SATSA**

SATSA: Student Association on Terrorism and Student Activism

April 13th event: researchers from other universities and high level officials to speak at SU

Requested amount: \$5,000

Finance Committee's recommendation: \$4,300

The committee felt that the proposal was bit excessive in food costs and they think that the gap should be able to be made up by outside sources.

Motion to accept finance committee's recommendations made, seconded, and carried.

#### **ii. Startup Funding - Whitman**

The Whitman School has applied for the full amount

Whitman's case competition: 12 schools on March 23rd, 18 teams; those teams will come in and present in front of judges, which will be about \$350

A social will be put on after the event

Every year, the students participate in Duke Games - compete against other MBA programs - raised about 1.8 million dollars for the Special Olympics.

Motion to accept the finance committee's recommendation made, seconded, and carried.

### **b. Outreach Committee (Todd Metcalfe)**

Family event at the dome: the dome was unresponsive to our request to purchase \$1500 worth of tickets. The committee is not sure what it would like to do instead. They would like to propose that that money go towards two family-oriented events and promotional material for those events.

Motion to reallocate the \$1500 towards two family-oriented events in lieu of dome night is made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

Motion to allocate up to \$500 to a wine tasting and a wine dinner (2 separate events) that will be held here around mid-April is made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

Motion to allocate \$250 towards Karaoke events is made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

### **c. Student Legal Services (Chris Bianchi)**

Today, there was a meeting with Student Legal Services and the representative from SA. Expenses appear to be in line with what they have been in previous years. They are requesting an amount of approximately \$59,000, or about \$12 per graduate student, and these funds will have the chance to be approved at the April Budget Meeting.

## **VII. Old Business**

### **VIII. New Business**

#### **a. Proposal for Recommending Executive Officer Pay Rates**

In the restructuring of those positions, the number of hours required has been minimized to just 10 hours per week, which is why the committee has made the recommendations that they have made.

Q. How can we slash benefits from our GSO positions but advocate for benefits for all graduate students at large?

A. This question was not answered due to procedural rules of order.

Q. Have the positions always been full time?

A. Jack explains the financial history of the positions for the past 6 years, which is the amount of time from which we have data.

Q. Do we know the rationale for the previous increase in pay and the addition of the benefits?

A. Yes: the pay was raised to a level that was commensurate with the amount of work that was being done - it was raised to be about between humanities and science in order to be fair.

Q. Perhaps the position most in question here: the President. Does the President feel that the pay cut is fair in light of the new way the President's role has been written?

A. President Welshans feels that the President is going to have to work more than 10 hours per week, no matter what is written. If that means that the President will be working more hours with less pay, she feels that that will be the way it unfolds.

Q. Can we adjust the pay for the other positions and leave the President's position the way it is?

A. We can make adjustments in pay as the senate sees fit up to and during the Budget Meeting in April.

Q. What would it take to get that President's position regular benefits as one would get with an assistantship?

A. In order to do that, our President's position would have to be moved to a TA line under the graduate school; this would mean a loss of control over the taxes, social security, and other financial implications. The GSO's status at the university is such that anyone who is employed by us can not receive TA insurance. The health benefits that the President and Comptroller currently get are a result of the GSO's award of a health care stipend which the holders of those

positions may use if necessary to purchase their own health care.

Q. How will the comptroller's position change?

A. Meeting with the finance committee, managing the financial aspects of the GSO. The bookkeeper would be more of a data management position.

Q. Is it possible for the comptroller's position to actually be halftime?

A. If there is a good working relationship between the bookkeeper and the comptroller, yes.

Points from the floor:

All the anecdotal information that we have so far puts even these reduced levels at the top of the pay scale for most graduate school organizations. It's an engagement issue: when people do the work because they want to do the work, they do a better job.

It is a concern that relying on individuals to do this out of the goodness of their hearts is what we're trying to do here...

It has been understood that people have not been able to run for these positions when they were full time because the workload is restrictive. These changes seem to be helping to put an executive board position in reach.

The positions, requirements, and duties have changed, except for that of the President.

Melissa points out that we could offer benefits while being reasonably sure that most people with TAs would not take them.

This is a good opportunity to set best practices - insurance is important, and the GSO president carries a lot of weight, which should be supported by a reasonable amount of money.

Q. Would it strain our budget to offer healthcare to all the positions?

A. Jack says that we are in healthy financial shape.

A motion is made and seconded to add health benefits to every member of the eboard except the Webmaster. Motion carries 23-1

An amendment is proposed and seconded to increase the President's pay so that it will stay at its current amount.

Motion carries 13-8.

Q. Is it possible to come to some middle ground since the President will ostensibly be doing less work?

A. Patrick explains that this can only be done through another constitutional amendment, which would have to be brought to the 7th Regular Business Meeting and voted upon at the Budget and Elections Meeting.

Motion to postpone voting on this proposal until the next meeting is made, seconded, and carried; the Finance Committee is charged with reporting on the financial impact of

the amendments to the proposal as they have been voted upon.

Todd Metcalf moves the question: a vote to vote on this right now is taken and passes 16-8.

The subsequent vote to adopt this proposal passes 18-5 and will be sent to the finance committee for their recommendations.

**b. Law School Representation Amendment**

This amendment would bring the law school into the same relationship realm as ESF - giving them representation. It will be voted upon at the next meeting as per parliamentary procedure.

**IX. Remarks for the Record**

- Melissa thanks the GSO very much for thinking carefully about these decisions
- Monthly email blast - if people have events, email the GSO
- Eboard will be hosting an Open Forum in Newhouse 1 Room 102 on Monday from 5:30-7:00

**X. Announcements**

- a. Committee Chair Lunch March 2 at 11:30am @the Faculty Center
- b. Please consider running for the eboard
- c. Electric vehicles 7pm tonight Maxwell Auditorium - food & drinks
- d. Patrick announces his candidacy for the position of Internal Vice President

**XI. Adjournment**

6:04pm