



GSO Senate Regular Business Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2018

Life Sciences 105

5:30pm

I. Call to Order

- a. Rikki Sargent called the meeting to order at 5.30 pm.

II. Roll Call

- a. 25 voting Senators were present from various departments for the initial roll call
- b. The following officers were present: Jack Wilson, Sakshi Sinha, Rikki Sargent, Joshua Fenton, Sweta Roy, Zoey

III. Vote to allow Thomas Dennison (Chair of the Student Health Insurance Working Group), Peter Vanable (Co-Chair of the Graduate Student Health Insurance Working Group), and Wes Rogers (1 of 2 consultants working with the Graduate Student Health Insurance Working Group) to speak to the Senate Body about the Graduate Student Health Insurance Working Group and provide an update on the progress of the group.

- a. Vote to allow them to attend the meeting. Result: Yes: 26 Senators: 0 Senator No: Abstain: 0 Senator. The health insurance working group allowed to speak to Senate Body and provide an update on the progress of the group.
- b. Introduction provided by each of the members in the working group.
- c. Reason for being in the meeting is to get comments to transition graduate assistance to student health plan or maintain them in employment plan.
- d. The working group wants to consider both options and request Senate to provide their recommendation and their perspective on this change.
- e. Middle plan value consists of three types of plans: gold, silver & bronze plans. All insurance companies who sell individual plans are required to provide their value for each plan. In addition to cost, the value of the plan should also be considered and taken care. Syracuse University Blue plan has its value between gold and platinum plan. Value of Aetna plan has its value as platinum plan.
- f. Other difference in the plan is in its structure. Student plan is designed with the academic year. SU Blue plan starts from the start of the year i.e January
- g. The cost of Aetna plan is lower than SU blue plan
- h. Aetna plan requires to pay entire payment upfront in the initial month. Payment in installments can be discussed and considered.

- i. The working group also discussed about the bidding process which considers the actuarial information. The risks are analyzed and then as per the total students and graduate assistant the number is factored. The choice is done by looking at economics and nothing is decided priority.
- j. The Student health plan does not include Dental and Vision. Can discuss with carriers for voluntarily adding dental and vision coverage.
- k. Suggestion: Addressing mental health should be included in the health plans.
 - i. Mental health is covered extensively in both plans.
- l. Question: What will be the determining factor for the transition?
 - i. Most important factor is providing help to students. Quality of plan, Cost of plan, good access to resources are the important factors considered for transition.
- m. Question: How are students paying for these plans?
 - i. It is deducted from the student cheque for SU Blue plan
- n. Aetna health plan is platinum level plan. All carriers file specific benefits and detailed information will be available.
- o. Suggestion: Some student health plan give coverage of 90 days even after graduation, detailed information should be there in RFP document for the coverage after graduation
- p. Question: How do the plans cover reckless behavior?
 - i. The plan covers injuries.
- q. Question: How will Copay or co-insurance amount affect students visiting frequently to doctor?
 - i. Aetna plan has a Copay of \$25 which is required to be paid at each visit. Co-insurance amount is usually 10% of the total amount.
 - ii. Copay can exceed the co-insurance amount if visited frequently to hospitals.
 - iii. Evaluation can be don't for both plans and see what can benefit the students.
 - iv. Most universities have co-insurance and have gold level plan. Their benefits are much lower the SU Health plan which has the platinum level plan.
- r. Question: Is the insurance amount different for graduate students, fellows, graduate assistantships?
 - i. It is essential to think about the subsidized amount and analyze it for every type of student.
 - ii. Hope to have similar amount for fellows and graduate assistantship.
 - iii. Regular graduate students will be directly put in the student health plan.
- s. Question: What's the timeline?
 - i. It is essential to get good information tonight by the meeting and detailed work should be completed by the end of Semester.
- t. 85% of graduate assistants are in SU Blue plan. SU Orange and SU Pro are lower as compared to SU Blue.
- u. Student Health Plan stabilizes the plan for the overall academic year whether you are being a fellow or graduate assistantship or any change in between.
- v. Question: What is the subsidy amount paid by university?
 - i. The amount is not fixed. The university pays the excess cost depending on the claims.

- w. Question: Is there any one semester plan? Till December?
 - i. Some universities do have coverage for semester. SU Student plan is not totally semester wise but can be thought and discussed.

IV. Approval of Previous Minutes

- a. *Present previous minutes; vote will occur at current business meeting*
 - i. Debate ended with no comments
 - ii. Minutes approved with a voice vote.

V. Executive, Committee, and Other Leadership Reports

a. President's Report

- i. *Stipend*
 - 1. Schools are expected to have an average stipend increase of 2.5% for graduate students.
- ii. *Employee Health Insurance*
 - 1. Discussed with the Working group tonight in detail.
 - 2. Please provide your feedback, so that the right health insurance plan can be selected.
- iii. *Ombuds Office*
 - 1. Implementation of Ombuds Office is in progress and should be done by the end of the academic year.
 - 2. A search committee will be appointed by Chancellor for a full-time Ombuds.
- iv. *Student Legal Services (SLS)*
 - 1. Student Legal Services is to be replaced with in-house lawyers, effective Fall 2018.
 - 2. This change is not liked by the GSO President since SLS is important and should not be removed.
 - 3. SLS is financed both by GSO and Student Association. GSO needs to convince them to keep SLS.
 - 4. GSO currently funds 25% of the total SLS funding.
 - 5. Last year SA's noticed that more than half of SLS is used by graduate students so they want to remove SLS and have in-house lawyers.
 - 6. SLS cannot handle immigration cases.
 - 7. Last year, SA also requested SLS to bill hours of working. However, it was not possible since this information needs to be confidential.
 - 8. SA needs to discuss with their Senate and GSO needs to request them to not remove SLS.
 - 9. Joshua will be sending a RFP to all committees and request for their budget next year. However, It's very difficult for GSO to fund SLS completely.
 - 10. SLS has two lawyers with 3-4 staffers and one office which cannot be reduced, hence it's very difficult to reduce the SLS overall budget.
 - 11. Suggestion: It is important to work along with SA and with corporation.

v. *NAGPS*

1. Will be attending the conference in Washington from March 9th – March 13th
2. Details discussed in the IVP's report.

b. Internal VP's Report

i. *Sexual Assault and Harassment Training (Deadline-February 28th)*

1. Please completed the training. Email has been sent.
2. Deadline is February 28th

ii. *Committee Update Planned for Next Meeting*

1. Lot of committee is working hard and would need their update before the next meeting.

iii. *RSO Reregistration (Deadline-March 31st)*

1. Please register if you are part of RSO by 31st March 2018.

iv. *New Non-Academic RSO: Saudi Student Organization at Syracuse University*

1. Will be talking about their start-up fund in the Comptrollers report.

v. *Consider Running for a GSO Exec Board Position!*

1. Please consider running for the GSO Exec Board position for the next year.
2. Details can be discussed with the Executive Board members.

vi. *NAPGPS Advocacy Summit and Legislative Action Days and Regional Conference Call*

1. Please email to Internal VP with a cover letter showing interest in attending the event.
2. Most of the student leaders attend the event.
3. Some topics which are discussed in the event are: Tax, Loan OPT/CPT, Visa. Detailed information can also be provided.
4. NAGPS is divided in 5 regions. Various University people share their best practices in the event.
5. They will also be electing their board member in the meeting.
6. March 9th to March 13th – Legislative Action Days – Washington DC
7. April 20-22nd – Regional conference Call
8. Email with details will be also provided soon.

c. External VP's Report

i. *Past Events:*

1. Welcome Back Party
2. Winter Olympics Night Watching

ii. *Upcoming Events:*

1. TGIF – Next Friday
2. Spring Paint Night (March 23rd)
3. Winter Ice Skating (TBD)
4. Laser Tag Party
5. GSO Spring Picnic

d. Comptroller's Report

i. Whitman GSO Special Programming

1. Requesting fund (\$1000) for Holi
2. Amount requested includes Food and Beverages, organic powder colors, speaker and 16' by 16' canopy.
3. Finance Committee recommends to provide \$1000 for Holi Event.
4. Motion made to vote. Voice vote done to end debate and vote.
5. After the voting for the recommendation to fund \$1000 with a result of YES: 21 Senators, NO: 4 Senators, abstain:0 Senator, the amount of \$1000 will be granted to Whitman GSO Programming.

ii. MGO Special Programming

1. Requesting fund (\$614.55) for First Year Help Sessions
2. Amount requested includes Pizza for 15 events and Soda for 15 meetings.
3. Finance Committee recommends to provide \$614.55 for the First-Year Help Sessions.
4. It's a great help for first year students.
5. Motion made to vote. Voice vote done to end debate and vote.
6. After the voting for the recommendation to fund **\$614.55** with a result of YES: 27 Senators, NO: 0 Senator, abstain:0 Senator, the amount of **\$614.55** will be granted to MGO Special Programming.

iii. SSOSU New Organization Funding

1. Requesting fund (\$150) to SSOSU New Organization.
2. Cultural national organization to help students get involved with other committees.
3. Finance Committee recommends to provide \$150
4. Motion made to vote. Voice vote done to end debate and vote.
5. After the voting for the recommendation to fund **\$150** with a result of YES: 25 Senators, NO: 1 Senator, abstain:0 Senator, the amount of **\$150** will be granted to MGO Special Programming.

e. Financial Secretary's Report

- i. No Report

f. Recording Secretary's Report

- i. No Report

VI. Old Business

VII. New Business

a. Elections

i. Senator-at-Large (3)

1. At-large Senator role described
2. Nominations:
 - a. Ben Sadlek

3. Voting performed with result Yes:24 Senators, No: 1 Senator, Abstain: 1 Senator.
4. **Ben Sadlek** has been voted as an At-large Senator

b. Resolution on Unionization

- i. Resolution was read and presented to the Senate.
- ii. The resolution is open for debate.
- iii. Motion raised to amend replace “chilled” with “suppressed”
- iv. Motion made to end debate and vote. Voice vote done on amended motion was passed.
- v. Debate continues. Everyone should have the right to respectfully speak up in Unionization.
- vi. Motion to amend and add in the resolution; **Resolved, that the Employment Issues Committee is tasked with interfacing with the unionization effort, consider the question of unionization, and present a list of recommendations for the next Senate meeting.**
- vii. Motion raised to end debate and voice vote done to end debate.
- viii. Voice vote on the amended motion was done and passed.
- ix. Motion to end debate was done and voice was done to end debate.
- x. Vote done on the resolution with a result of Yes: 11 Senators, No: 5 Senators, Abstain: 3 Senators. The resolution is **passed**.

c. Resolution on Strengthening Communication between GSO and SA.

- i. Resolution was read and presented to the Senate by the GSO President
- ii. Motion to postpone till next meeting.
- iii. Voice vote done followed by clicker vote.
- iv. Vote done with a result of: Yes: 10 Senators, No:7 Senators, Abstain:1 Senator. The resolution will be discussed in the next meeting.

VIII. Remarks for the Record

IX. Announcements

- a. Next Meeting: March 21, 2018 (Life Sciences 105)

X. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm