

President’s Report to the Senate

April 10, 2019 Regular Business Meeting

Jack Wilson, GSO President

**Student Procedural Advisors**

As a result of discussion between Student Association (SA) and the University, students (graduate, undergraduate, and law) will now be trained as procedural advisors as part of an unpaid internship with Student Legal Services (SLS). Selection and oversight of the interns will be done by a committee consisting of 1 representative from the GSO, 1 representative from SA, and 1 member of SLS. No action by the Senate is necessary to make this happen; either an EBoard member or an appointed Senator will sit on this committee next Academic Year.

**SHIP Rates for 2019-2020 AY**

Pending NYS review, rates for the health insurance plan next academic year will be the same at this year. The only anticipated change is a $0.33 increase in the total cost of the vision plan before subsidy.

**NAGPS Northeast Regional Conference**

Rui Gomes and I attended the NAGPS Northeast Regional Conference March 29th and 30th to touch base with our fellow GSOs and represent the interests of SU GSO at the business meeting. There, Rui was elected Director of Communications and Outreach for the Northeast Region. I extend to him my congratulations.

In addition to elections and basic upkeep, we responded to a sensitive matter revealed to membership on March 28th. An unnamed member of the NAGPS national Board of Directors embezzled nearly $30K from the organization during his time as Director of Finance and as President. This person is not a student at SU and no SU GSO funds were stolen. This person admitted as much at an in-person Board meeting and resigned on the spot. In response, the Board of Directors obtained pro bono legal counsel, demanded immediate repayment of the funds, and reported this individual’s actions to their home university. Further, the Northeast Region has taken the following actions: it has condemned the person and their actions in the strongest possible terms; named this person persona non grata and called on the national Board to do the same; called on the national Board to strip all conferred recognitions and titles and strip all references to the person; and called on the national Board to report this person to the relevant authorities.

**Integrating Online Graduate Students**

This meeting, I present a resolution to integrate online graduate students into the GSO through an amendment to our constitution. A final vote on this amendment will take place at a Special Meeting of the Senate at 5:30PM immediately preceding our Budget and Elections Special Meetings. To save time on our long string of Special Meetings I encourage discussion on the topic today.

After multiple in-person discussions with online graduate students, I feel confident that online graduate students share our desire to ensure they have representation in the GSO and have a voice in SU’s shared governance process. During these conversations, the online grads identified issues and projects we can start working on:

* Seminars and invited talks should be webcast and recorded so that online students have the access as main campus students
* Immersion experiences (essentially, externships) should be geographically distributed so that students don’t need to travel across the country to participate
* There should be increased access to merit-based scholarships
* There should be an expansion of resources for student veterans
* SU should take efforts to reduce solid waste on campus, e.g. no-trash days

The proposed amendment to the constitution is the necessary first step towards integrating the online students. Some wherewithal questions remain and will need to be answered in the next academic year. Three such questions include: the level of student fee to be assessed to online grads, the technology to allow online grads to participate in the Senate, and what GSO programs do they want access to. These questions can only be answered fully with online grad input and buy-in and such a thing can only be done with them as part of the GSO.

**Join the Executive Board!**