

President’s Report to the Senate

November 28, 2018 Regular Business Meeting

Jack Wilson, GSO President

**Towards a Policy Platform**

Since last meeting, two committees have reported back, one with changes. We understand that a limited amount of time was provided to meet and consider the platform. We are therefore postponing consideration until the Fifth Business Meeting to ensure the committees and Senators have the time to meet, consider, and recommend changes as necessary.

**Slutzker Center**

As of this time, a new director of the Slutzker Center has not been chosen, or if one has I have not been made aware. The selection process was led by a search committee comprised entirely of faculty and staff. If you read that sentence please ask me a question about the first sentence during Q/A please. I had the opportunity to meet 2 of the 4 finalists; I was unable to meet with the other 2 due to scheduling conflicts.

I met with the SU Board of Trustees in early November, and during that time advocated for an expansion of the Slutzker Center. I have reason to believe that a review of the Center and its resources will take place this Spring semester.

**Representation of online students**

We have the backing from the administration to proceed with integrating online students into the GSO. This reduces the issue to 2 questions:

1) How should online students be represented in our Senate?

2) What services will the GSO offer to online students?

Once these two questions are answered, the remaining issues of implementation (such as the level of student fee) fall into place. This will require conversation with online Grads as well as Grads who have studied abroad, which I hope to complete over the winter break. If any Senators studied abroad as part of their grad careers or know people who have please get them in touch with me.

**On-campus representation**

Dean Vanable of the Graduate School and I are in general agreement that effort needs to me made to reach out to academic programs which tend not to have representation in the GSO Senate. As of March 2018, 23 of the 151 academic programs had an active Academic Program Senator (the 18 at-large and university senators were excluded from this figure).

Background: Currently each academic plan may have a Senator to represent them. This came into effect a few years ago now. Before that, GSO Senators were selected by the Academic RSOs (e.g. PAIRA, ECS-GSO), such that each Senator (outside At-Large and University Senators) represented their Academic RSO and the number of Senate seats was yoked to the number of Academic RSOs. Attendance was encouraged by yoking RSO funding to senator attendance. These RSOs themselves represented a large majority of the graduate student body; therefore a majority of the graduate student body received representation. The makeup of the GSO Senate in many ways reflects this. For example, there are currently 23 Academic RSOs, and there is a high degree of overlap between the 23 Academic Program Senators and the 23 Academic RSOs.

We have identified academic programs that have not been represented in the Senate over the past 3 years and will be starting to reach out to those Grads.

**Long-Term Planning**

Finally, I would like to remind the Senate of 2 deadlines critical to the determination of what the GSO will or will not be doing next year. The first is around January/February of next year when I will report to Central the level of the graduate student fee for the next academic year. The next deadline is towards the end of April, when we meet to finalize the 2019-2020 budget.

I mention this because this gives us only a couple months to begin considering whether there are new programs we should launch or existing programs we should expand, contract, or cancel. Those decisions impact the level of student fee and in turn guide planning for the budget. By the time of the meeting a survey asking for your input pertaining to these questions will have been distributed. I encourage everyone to fill it out and email the EBoard for follow-up if you feel the need.

**Orange After Dark (OAD)**

It was mentioned in a report last meeting that Orange After Dark, a program within Enrollment and the Student Experience (ESE), may approach us for funding in exchange for being allowed to attend their events. We have learned that they will not be doing so.

OAD is a program hosting nighttime, alcohol-free events for SU students, these events have included trivia nights and discounted tickets to popular movies. Until last academic year Grads had broad access to these events, this access began to be restricted starting around Spring 2018. I have been informed by ESE that this restriction is financial in nature.