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## **GSO PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **6 December 2023**

#### **Welcoming New GSO Co-Advisor**

I am pleased to finally announce the Graduate Student Organization's new co-advisor: Dawn Singleton, the Vice President of Student Transition, Access and Inclusion in Syracuse University's Student Experience division. Dawn oversees the New Student Programs, the Intercultural Collective—home to the Disability Cultural Center, LGBTQ Resource Center, Multicultural Affairs and Native Student Program/113 Euclid, 119 Euclid, and the Center for International Services—and leads the Student Experience Division's efforts surrounding diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

Dawn joins Peter Venable, Dean of the Graduate School, as co-advisor of the GSO and will work to support the experience of Syracuse University's graduate and professional students. I think this is an exciting development for our graduate student government, providing more immediate graduate representative access to the Student Experience division and an ally in our work to integrate graduate students more fully into university programming and decision-making bodies.

#### **Catering Discount, the Inn Complete, and Food Service Worker Concerns**

Vice President Arnell and I met with John Papazoglou, Senior Vice President and Chief Operations Officer, on 28 November 2023 to discuss various items related to campus catering, the Inn Complete, and food service work. John oversees the non-academic units of the University that interact most frequently with students and guests on campus, including housing, retail operations, catering, and the commissary.

Regarding the catering discount, as the Comptroller previously announced, campus catering notified the Executive Board in early October that they ended the 25% discount offered to the GSO and its affiliated recognized graduate student organizations. We immediately went to work expressing that this decision, made without prior warning or discussion, would place an unanticipated financial burden on the GSO and its graduate affiliates. Dean Venable assisted us with contacting John and negotiating a more suitable and mutually beneficial arrangement.

In short, the GSO and its affiliates will be offered a 10% discount on catering—%15 if through the Inn Complete— for the remainder of this fiscal year, *though the discount will not apply to alcohol or labor*. There are no strings attached, but this arrangement will end when the fiscal year concludes. We ought, then, to keep this in mind when preparing the budget for next year.

Regarding the Inn Complete, the University conducted major renovations to the Inn, as well as the Goldstein Student Center over the past year. They are interested in making the Inn a graduate-student-oriented event space, but the GSO will not have to fund it. Currently, the Inn Complete is open from 11-2 for lunch and accepts meal plan. They want to get it back open at night with some formalized regular programming and would like the GSO's input on shaping that programming.

In light of this, John would like to hold a "grand re-opening" event, for which the GSO will not pay, sometime early in the Spring semester to spur graduate student interest in the Inn Complete. The purpose of the event will be to showcase the upgraded facility as well as give graduate students and their representatives a chance to meet and talk with members of the University's senior leadership such as John himself, Peter Vanable, Dawn Singleton, Mary Grace Almandrez, and Allen Groves. The details of the event, including the invited guest list, are still in process.

Finally, VP Arnell and I were able to discuss some of the University's employment practices, especially regarding food-service workers and international students, in light of issues raised by the Graduate Employment Issues Committee's survey conducted at the end of last year. The issues discussed included the perception of biased hiring practices, respect issues and fear of retaliation, and unfair shift-swapping. John was receptive to the feedback and is at work to address them.

### **Permission for Remote Work: Comptroller**

Our Comptroller, Melissa Alvisi, was recently notified that—after a long verification process—she has been offered a prestigious internship in the Executive Office of the President in Washington, D.C. The internship is part of the requirements for the Robertson Foundation for Government Fellowship that Syracuse University awarded Alvisi and is crucial to her career development. It will run from January 22 through April 26, meaning that the Comptroller will be away from campus for much of the Spring semester.

Comptroller Alvisi petitioned the Executive Board for permission to perform her Comptroller work remotely for the Spring semester.<sup>1</sup> After consulting the Parliamentarian and other

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<sup>1</sup> **GSOC Article II, Section 2(k)**: "Executive Officers are expected to be students in residence at Syracuse University's main campus in Syracuse, NY during their terms in office. In the event that their studies or other activities call them away from campus, periods of absence greater than two weeks must be reported to the GSO Senate and

members of the Rules and Administration Committee, we granted the Comptroller permission to work remotely for the Spring Semester provided that (1) Alvisi attend the GSO Senate meetings remotely and (2) the Financial Secretary, Aditee Malviya, act as the Comptroller's in-person proxy for any duties that cannot be performed remotely (to which both the Comptroller and Financial Secretary agreed). Given that Comptroller Alvisi was able to perform her duties well while interning at the Department of Commerce in Singapore for most of the summer, the Executive Board has faith that she will do just as well with this arrangement for the Spring.

That being said—in our student government's custom of empowering all members with the knowledge of their constitutional and parliamentary powers—the Senate reserves the right to overturn any decision of the Executive Board should it so choose.<sup>2</sup>

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permission must be sought and received from the Executive Board, unless such absence occurs strictly during the winter break.”

<sup>2</sup> **GSOC Article I, Section 13(m)**: “The Senate shall have the power to... Override any action, including a veto, of the Executive Board or any of its Officers by resolution with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote...”