

GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Public Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2013

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 5:37 pm.

Presidential Remarks

President Bonistall began by wishing all present a Happy Valentine's Day. Next, she welcomed visitors and several new Senators.

Introduction of New Administrators

President Bonistall also introduced several new administrators: Jim Richards, who is taking over for Dr. Riordan as Vice Provost of Graduate and Professional Education; John Sawyer, Interim Associate Provost for Institutional Research and Effectiveness; Ravi Ammigan, Director of the Office of International Students and Scholars; and Domenico Grasso, who will take over as Provost in August.

II. GUEST SPEAKER: DR. ALLEN PRETTYMAN

Dr. Prettyman introduced himself as Director of the Nurse Managed Health Center. He explained that the Nurse Managed Health Center is part of the School of Nursing in the College of Health Sciences. Founded in 2010, the Center supports students in the college as a teaching and learning center where students can immerse themselves in healthcare.

Dr. Prettyman noted that nurse managed health centers are not common; there are only 250 nationwide, and the Nurse Managed Health Center on campus is the only one in the state of Delaware.

The Nurse Managed Health Center is known for its patient-centered care and holistic healthcare, and not just treatment of injuries. The Center is also interdisciplinary, and involves the disciplines of nursing, physical therapy, kinesiology, and wellness. On campus, the Center also provides research support for clearance of human subjects, such as screenings and stress testing. The facility is currently located in McDowell Hall, but it will be moving to the STAR campus (the site of the old Chrysler plant) by next Fall.

The staff of the Nurse Managed Health Center includes the medical director, nurse practitioners, School of Nursing faculty who train nurse practitioners, and physicians. The Center is open during regular business hours Monday through Friday, and it plans to have evening hours available once it has relocated. Some walk-in appointments are available.

Services offered by the Nurse Managed Health Center include physical exams, immunizations, and care for illness and injury. All patients must be at least 18 years of age, and families of

graduate students are eligible for care. Work-related injuries (from workers' compensation claims) are also cared for at the Center with no out-of-pocket expense for the patient. The Center accepts student health insurance and offers a discount for those who pay in cash. Dr. Prettyman anticipates that the Center will begin offering chronic disease management services at the Center in the near future, and he mentioned that the University is working to establish several other locations throughout the state.

Parliamentarian Thomson asked whether the Nurse Managed Health Center is open to general community. Dr. Prettyman answered in the affirmative, and noted that it accepts all major insurance.

Senator Lazo asked whether the Center provides routine physicals? Dr. Prettyman answered in the affirmative. Senator Lazo followed up by asking whether the annual physical exam that is now covered under the graduate student health insurance plan can be performed at the Center. Dr. Prettyman was not sure, but was open to providing the service and helping the student work through the billing process.

President Bonistall noted that the Graduate Student Government tries to bring groups or administrators from across campus that have resources for graduate students to the monthly meetings. The Executive Council welcomes suggestions for speakers and will extend an invitation on behalf of the organization.

III. INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Communication Committee – Senator Reid

Vice President Ralston presented the committee report for Senator Reid.

The Communications Committee has been updating the website; in particular, it is updating the list of Senators and unrepresented programs, posting flyers and registration links for upcoming events, adding email contact information for all committee chairs, and promoting highlights and upcoming events on the homepage. It is also planning on adding a page that contain all pertinent information about the upcoming elections cycle. Anyone with experience with website design is encouraged to join the committee to assist with the updates.

Events Committee – Senator Barnard

Vice President Ralston presented the committee report for Senator Barnard.

The Events Committee's primary focus for the spring semester is planning the Graduate Forum, which will be held on May 3. Vice President Ralston explained that the Graduate Forum is a campus-wide conference that gives graduate students an opportunity to present research, either in the form of 8-minute elevator speeches or through during a poster session. The committee is currently working on booking a keynote speaker; once this is finalized, Senators will receive a save-the-date reminder to distribute to their constituents.

Social Committee – Senator Nelan

Senator Nelan announced that the ice-skating social was a success, and that the Graduate Student Government was able to donate the collected canned food to the Delaware Food Bank.

The Social Committee has also planned a spring Eat and Greet for February 26 from 5:00 to 6:30 pm at Bayard Sharp Hall; Dr. Martin sent an email with a flyer about this to all graduate students on Tuesday. Senator Nelan requested that Senators post the flyer in the graduate student spaces in their departments. The program will feature a short performance by Violins4Ward, who performed at the November Graduate Student Gala, and raffles for gift certificates to Timothy's, Ski Bum, Brunswick Blue Hen Lanes, and McGlynn's Pub.

IV. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEES

Diversity Committee – Senator London & Senator Moinolmolki

Senator Moinolmolki announced that the first Diversity Roundtable Discussion Luncheon was held on January 25 with members of the Black Graduate Student Association and Persian Graduate Student Representative Members, and that it was very successful. The Diversity Committee has selected dates for five or six more Roundtable Discussions, which will culminate in the Diversity Panel on April 19. The committee is also working on initiatives to increase its membership.

The next meeting is on February 19 at 6:00 pm in 207 Trabant. All are welcome to attend.

Student Life Committee – Senator Razzook & Senator Levy

Senator Berg announced that the Student Life Committee has compiled a list of resources for students who are preparing their taxes; the list will be posted on the Graduate Student Government website: <http://sites.udel.edu/gsg/>. In particular, there are two programs that help low-income persons (such as graduate students) prepare and file their taxes. He also noted that the University has a license for a tax resource for international students.

Parliamentarian Thomson noted that students can use the TurboTax Freedom Edition to file state and federal taxes online for free.

Senator McCormack asked whether the programs require Delaware residency. Senator Berg replied that he is not sure if some of the local services will help individuals who live out-of-state.

Senator Levy reported that the Student Life Committee is looking into prescription reimbursements in the graduate student health plan. In particular, the committee has heard that there are students who need to pay thousands of dollars each month out of pocket for prescription medications. Even though they receive a reimbursement, it is still a financial hardship to have to pay so much cash upfront. The committee is currently seeking feedback on the issue from graduate students.

Senator Levy also noted that he is attending a meeting with Parking and Transportation Services on March 4, and encouraged graduate students to contact him at [nicklevy@udel.edu](mailto:nickleavy@udel.edu) if they have thoughts or concerns that they would like him to share in the meeting.

Senator Razzook stated that the Student Life Committee is working to help graduate students with such things as paychecks, healthcare, and the “social scene”, but it also wants to be more proactive rather than reactive.

Sustainability Committee – Senator Cario & Senator Gildemeyer

Vice President Caro presented the committee report for Senator Cario.

The Sustainability Committee is continuing to work with Dining Services on composting, and is trying to help disseminate information about what composting projects are currently in progress. The committee will also be disseminating a survey to all graduate students asking about office temperature; he encouraged students to respond to the survey when they see it. Data from the survey will have the potential to decrease energy use that is wasting in heating or cooling office spaces on campus.

The committee is also actively gearing up for this spring’s second annual Dumpster Detour; Anne Goodman and Vice President Caro will be co-chairing a committee to work on this project. As background, Dumpster Detour aims to collect items like furniture or appliances that undergraduates would otherwise throw away when they move out of the dorms at the end of the spring semester. The collected items are then donated to charity or recycled. Member Goodman emphasized that all are welcome to participate, and that volunteers will be needed to help collect items and load trucks.

Vice President Caro also introduced Brian Gildemeyer as the new co-chair of the Sustainability Committee, and noted that the committee has had good continuity, despite the previous chair having graduated at the end of the fall, because there has been an overlap in leadership through the co-chair position.

The next meeting is on February 25 at 4:00 pm. All are welcome to attend.

V. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Parliamentarian Thomson explained that the Governance Committee exists to assist in writing legislation. She announced that the committee has seen no new legislation in the past month, and encouraged anyone with ideas for legislation to contact her.

VI. EXTERNAL COMMITTEES

Newark City Council – Member Graham

Member Graham explained that she attends the Newark City Council meetings, which occur every two weeks, but she does not have a seat on the Council. The City of Newark manages the following services: building inspection and codes; land use and zoning; electric bills (since the City owns the utility); police, parks and recreation; garbage; street maintenance; snow removal; water and waste water; and the Alderman’s Court. While anyone on campus is a consumer, few graduate students are actually residents of Newark, so most have no direct representation on the City Council. She has the opportunity to address the Council briefly to apprise them of graduate

student concerns before each meeting. She also suggested that it might be worthwhile to designate students to attend City Council subcommittee meetings since they handle a lot of the Council's work.

Vice Provost Richards noted that there is a relationship between University of Delaware students, the Newark police, and the Alderman's Court: the City makes \$1.7 million profit annually from student fines and arrests. He also noted that Delmarva installed smart meters in houses that they service and have passed on the cost to rate payers, whereas the City also installed the meters but did not raise electricity rates. He also advised students to be careful around campus with things like open containers.

Faculty Senate – Senator Portnoi & Senator Jones

Senator Portnoi explained that the Faculty Senate is a body much like the Graduate Student Government Senate, and with a similar function. Graduate students have two seats and two votes on the Faculty Senate. Senator Jones explained that most of the meeting is usually administrative business.

At the past Faculty Senate meeting, Athletic Director Eric Ziady talked about his previous experience at Boston College developing students academically, socially, and athletically, and building connections with the community. He is very excited about the University's future in athletics and is eager about ensuring academic success of athletes. He noted that did not like the fact juniors and seniors live off campus. Interim Provost Nancy Brickhouse also addressed the Senate to introduce new administrators.

Recent business has also included a question, raised by students, about whether a policy exists that prevents them from having to take three exams in one day. While there is no such policy in place, schedulers try their best to ensure this does not occur, and they ask faculty to cooperate.

The Student Code of Conduct has been amended to include a policy prohibiting posting class notes from being posted on the Internet. Specifically, if faculty can state in their syllabus that class notes are not to be posted online, then anyone found to have done can be cited as having violated the Student Code of Conduct. The difficulty here is that it can be very hard to track down offenders.

Vice Provost Richards explained that the Faculty Senate operates such that some faculty can stand up and champion issues about which they feel strongly, while others sit passively. However, everybody listens when students speak. In particular, faculty will listen to any concerns brought to the Senate by the student (graduate or undergraduate) representatives.

Senator Eskandarikhoe asked whether graduate student stipends are addressed by the Faculty Senate. President Bonistall replied in the negative; graduate student stipends are determined in a cabinet on which graduate students are represented by Vice Provost Richards. Senator Portnoi noted that stipends can depend on the program, and that some research assistant positions or departments pay more.

Member Graham suggested that conversations across departments might be beneficial to smaller departments. As an example, she cited that in a previous semester, when similar courses were offered in different departments, one was run and the other was cancelled. In this regard, it would seem more efficient if the departments had had some coordination beforehand. Senator Lazo noted that this topic might be more appropriate for discussion at the college level. Vice Provost Richards noted that such conversations are difficult to have between colleges since their budgets

are disjoint. He suggested that students who find a class cancelled, when a similar one is offered in another department, can petition their department chair for course substitution. Dr. Martin noted that the course substitution form is available on Graduate and Professional Education website: <http://www.udel.edu/gradoffice/index.html>.

Dr. Martin added that the agendas are posted online if graduate students are interested in Faculty Senate business.

Diversity and Equity Commission – President Bonistall

President Bonistall reported that the Diversity and Equity Commission has not yet had its first meeting of the semester, so she had no updates.

Organizational Delegate Updates

Representative Remy reported that the Black Graduate Student Association held a welcome back event in the Mechanical Hall Art Gallery last Thursday where participants viewed and enjoyed an exhibit by a Nigerian artist.

Senator Jones asked whether the Black Graduate Student Association will continue to sponsor study nights. Representative Remy replied in the affirmative: study nights will occur each Wednesday from 6:00 to 8:00 pm in 124 Memorial Hall.

VII. ELECTIONS UPDATE

Officer Slate

Office Dahl began by announcing the current slate:

President: Chris Castillo, Alex Razzook

Vice President of Internal Affairs: Alex Ames, Joe Brodie, Maggie Nelan

Vice President of Student Affairs: Cesar Caro, Alex Razzook

Membership Officer: Sharelle Law

Secretary: no nominations accepted

Parliamentarian: Isaac Harris

She noted that many of the candidates had met with current officers to discuss the position, and there were many more were nominated than accepted. She also encouraged anyone interested in the Secretary position to contact her.

Election Rules

Before announcing the election rules, Officer Dahl thanked Senators Jones and Rice for their service to the Elections Committee.

Rules for officer position elections are as follows:

Length of speeches: Speeches should last no more than 3 minutes.

Questions: Following each candidate's speech, the floor will be open for questions from the audience. The time limit for answering questions will be 5 minutes per candidate.

Order of speeches: Speeches will be given in the following order: Parliamentarian, Membership Officer, Secretary, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of Student Affairs, President. If there is more than one candidate for a position, the speeches for that position will be delivered in alphabetical order.

Biographies: The Elections Committee will develop a brief biography questionnaire to distribute to candidates, who will have one week to return their responses. One photo of the candidate will be due with the biography. The biography content and photo will be posted on the Graduate Student Government and polling websites. Any candidate not submitting a photo or biography by the deadline will have only a name displayed on the elections page. Officer Dahl kindly requested prompt turn-around from candidates with their information once the email is sent.

There will be no voting during the special elections meeting; rather, Senators will vote online afterward.

President Bonistall reiterated that only Senators will vote for officers; all members of a program will vote for that program's senator.

Senator candidates will also be asked for biographical information to post online, but they will not be giving speeches.

Officer Election Timeline

The timeline for officer elections is as follows:

February 14: Nominations for officer positions were due to the Elections Chair by the start of the meeting; the slate has already been announced. Candidates will soon receive an email from Officer Dahl requesting biographical information, and they will have one week to return the email with the requested information.

March 21: There will be a special election meeting at which the officer candidates will give speeches. The general meeting for March is on March 14; it was written into the By-laws that election business does interfere with regular business, hence the special meeting. The Senate can vote to waive the special meeting and conduct speeches at the March 14 meeting. Polls open immediately following the speeches and will stay open for one week. After the polls close, an email will be sent to the Graduate Student Government mailing list announcing the victors.

Officer Dahl elaborated that the intent of the special election meeting was to accommodate large numbers of candidates running for office. She explained that if, based on the size and composition of the slate, the Senate feels that elections business can be handled successfully during the regular March meeting, that it may vote to waive the special meeting. She further explained that while waiving the special meeting is technically in violation of the By-laws, if the organization decides that defying the stated rules of order is in the best interest of the organization, then it should go ahead and conduct business as it chooses.

Senator Election Timeline

The timeline for Senator elections is as follows:

March 7: Senator nominations are due to Officer Dahl by noon. Nominees will have the following week to either accept or decline the nomination.

March 14: Senator candidates for each program are announced. Following the meeting, candidates will receive an email from Officer Dahl requesting biographies and photos to be posted online; candidates will have one week to submit the requested information.

April 11: Polls open for Senator elections after the meeting and will remain open for one week.

VIII. OPEN FLOOR: PUBLIC COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Elections Discussion

Parliamentarian Thomson reiterated that the By-laws mandate the special election meeting, and that the organization cannot violate its By-laws. However, since the Graduate Student Government is self-governing, if the Senate chooses and there are no objections, then it may waive the special meeting.

Officer Dahl noted that there are currently nine individuals on the slate, and that the Elections Committee does not want the speeches to drag.

Vice Provost Richards asked whether it would be a good idea to record the speeches with UD Capture so that the whole graduate student population can view them. President Bonistall replied that she was doubtful that Senators would watch the video, and stated that she was concerned that since it is mandatory for Senators to attend the special meeting, that posting the video may allow them to shirk.

Senator Lazo noted that the whole process of giving speeches would take up to 80 minutes, potentially.

Senator Rice asked whether there would be a full agenda in March. President Bonistall replied that she expects the agenda to contain nothing exceptional, and that there need not be a guest speaker. She said that she could also ask committee chairs to give a heavier report in the agenda so they have to say less during their reports.

President Bonistall emphasized that the special election meeting is mandatory for Senators to attend, or to send a proxy if they cannot attend. Officer Dahl noted that the special election meeting would fall the day before spring break starts.

Senator Garcia asked whether majority or a unanimous vote was needed for waiving the special meeting. Vice Provost Richards stated that a 2/3 vote is needed, since that supermajority is needed to change by-laws.

Bus Service to Pine Brook Apartments

Last summer, the Graduate Student Government heard from students that were residents of the Pine Brook Apartments that University buses would no longer service the complex. President Bonistall opened a conversation with Parking and Transportation Services Director Richard Rind, who explained that Pine Brook decided not to pay the fee for University bus service for their residents, and that Transportation Services then decided to no longer service the complex on any bus routes. However, many current students did not know that this would be the case, and Director Rind agreed to continue bus service to the complex through the end of the fall semester. Over winter, students again realized bus service to Pine Brook had stopped; information had still not reached them, despite informative postings by Parking and Transportation Services on Twitter and UDaily. Moreover, bus service to Pine Brook is still indicated on the printed Shuttle Guide. President Bonistall heard students concerns about safety and received more than ninety signed petitions from students living in Pine Brook to continue bus service to the complex. President Bonistall brought the student concerns to Director Rind, who agreed to keep Pine Brook on the evening bus route through the end of the spring semester. President Bonistall is pleased that the conversation went well, and praised Director Rind for being so helpful to graduate student population. She added that the Graduate Student Government would disseminate information both about the current bus service to Pine Brook and about the discontinuation of service at the end of the spring unless Pine Brook pays the fee.

Senator Garcia asked whether students who are coming to the University next semester will know about the changes in bus route to Pine Brook, since the complex may not inform prospective residents at all. President Bonistall explained that the conversation is twofold: information needs to reach both current students and prospective students. She has talked with Director Rind about the information posted on the website about which apartment complexes are served by University buses. She also stated that the Graduate Student Government can host similar information on its webpage, and that she can disseminate the information to graduate ambassadors for when they answer emails about housing for prospective students. The bus route is still on Pine Brook's website; that is out of the University's control.

Vice Provost Richards stated that he has asked his staff to identify websites where students look for housing; he will approach those sites and ask them to add a link which points to a University-maintained page which indicates which complexes are on bus routes and which are not. The goal is that incoming students this spring should see the most up-to-date information.

Member Graham asked whether Pine Brook is privately owned, and whether there is anything in this situation that the City of Newark should know about. President Bonistall replied in the affirmative to the former, and in the negative to the latter.

Senator Tellez raised a similar concern about Megabus: she and her constituents use it often, but they do not feel safe debarking at the current bus station at night. She suggested that the location for the stop be changed to one more convenient for students who do not have cars, since University buses run there infrequently. President Bonistall suggested that having the stop at Trabant would be safer. Member Graham noted that a co-worker of hers initiated Megabus stop, and that she would ask her what channels to go through to try to get the stop moved. Senator Brodie asked whether the Graduate Student Government could encourage the University to provide shuttle service for students debarking from Megabus. President Bonistall recommended that the issue be referred to the Student Life Committee. Senator Jones asked whether the University Police offers escort services for students at night. Senator Garcia replied that such escorts should only be for transportation inside University property.

President Bonistall reiterated that she is pleased with how productive the conversation with Director Rind has been for graduate students, and she encouraged the Senate to pass a resolution commending him for his work on behalf of student safety. She also encouraged everyone to attend the next Governance Committee meeting to help her write the legislation.

Discussion: Learning Environment

President Bonistall received an email from a graduate student who was concerned about the learning environment on campus. Specifically, the student was working in the basement of Morris Library and felt uncomfortable and distracted while working. President Bonistall asked whether others have experienced anything similar, and expressed a desire to open a dialogue on what the Graduate Student Government can do to promote a positive learning environment.

Dr. Martin noted that there are graduate student representatives on the University Library Committee, and that it would be most productive to bring up the concerns there.

Senator McCormack asked about the context of the student's complaint. President Bonistall replied that the student needed to use one of the computers and so was not able to move to a different location. McCormack suggested graduate students might need better access to resources.

Senator Jones noted that the culture of Morris Library is focused on undergraduates, and suggested that having graduate student space would help alleviate this issue.

Open Floor

There was no discussion on Open Floor.

IX. SENATE FLOOR

Quorum was not present, so Senate Floor was not opened.

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Bonistall emphasized that Senators must send proxy if they can attend a meeting, since the Senate cannot conduct business without enough Senators or proxies present.

President Bonistall and Vice Provost Richards raffled off several door prizes, including a chocolate rose, tickets to wine tasting at Caffè Gelato, and a \$50 gift card to Home Grown, for those in attendance.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Castillo
Graduate Student Government Secretary