

GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT
Public Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2012

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm.

President Bonistall introduced herself and welcomed everyone in attendance. She asked the other officers to introduce themselves, and then she introduced Dr. Mary Martin, Assistant Provost for Graduate and Professional Education, who acts as an advisor and mentor to the Graduate Student Government.

II. GUEST SPEAKER: DEAN GEORGE WATSON

President Bonistall introduced Dean George Watson, Chair of the Provost Search Committee.

Dean Watson introduced himself and noted that he earned his Ph.D. at the University Delaware in the 1970s and returned to teach in 1987. He thanked those present for the work they do in the Graduate Student Government.

He explained that the provost is the academic head of the university, overseeing the academic deans, the director of the library, and the dean of students. Currently, Dean Watson is chair of the committee running a national search to fill the position. He explained that the committee is comprised of 13 faculty members and 4 non-faculty members and includes student representatives; the goal was to include all stakeholders in the decision process. President Bonistall sits on the committee representing graduate students.

At the beginning of the search process, President Harker told the committee what he thinks the provosts needs (to do) to be effective; these ideas fall into three major categories: responsibilities, ideal candidate experience, critical competencies for success. They were compiled into a Position and Candidate Specification document which is available online at www.udel.edu/provostsearch. The committee has also posted an ad in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. The search committee is interested in knowing whether they have represented graduate student interests in that document; graduate students are encouraged to read the document and contact President Bonistall with feedback. Individuals may be nominated for candidacy in the provost search by sending an email to bluehenprovost@spencerstuart.com. The committee vets candidates and makes a recommendation to President Harker, who makes the ultimate decision. The goal is for the committee to identify several ideal candidates from which to choose.

Senator Razzook asked how the final hiring decision is made. Dean Watson explained that the search committee does most of the work reviewing applications and interviewing applicants, and then gives a recommendation to President Harker.

Dean Watson also noted that this search is highly confidential. On many high-level searches nowadays, search committees want to protect the confidentiality of individuals who may already be deans or provosts at other universities. Thus, there will probably not be an opportunity for the public to meet the candidates.

President Bonistall thanked Dean Watson for his presentation and added that she is very interested in hearing feedback and taking it back to the committee since she is the graduate student representative on the search committee.

Senator Nichols asked if the document was distributed to all graduate students. President Bonistall noted that it was linked on a UDaily article but it probably has not gone out to all graduate students by email. The document is public, so Senators should feel free to forward it to their constituents.

III. MEMBERSHIP OFFICER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Officer Dahl reminded Senators to send her names and emails for their proxies no later than Tuesday, September 18, and she encouraged everyone to bring interested graduate students to Graduate Student Government meetings.

IV. INTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Vice President Ralston introduced the committees that fall under his jurisdiction and for which he liaises with the Executive Council: Communication, Events, and Social.

Communication Committee

Past Communication Committee accomplishments include a functioning and updated Graduate Student Government website, production of event promotion posters, and establishment of a photographic archive of activities. This year, the committee expects to continue maintaining the website and promoting Graduate Student Government events.

Events Committee

In past years, the Events Committee has assisted with planning and execution of the Graduate Student Organization Fair, Graduate Expo, Ph.D. Comics Movie Presentation, and Graduate Student Forum. This year, they are looking forward to hosting a Wine and Cheese Event on November 1 (co-coordinated by a string quartet) and the Third Annual Graduate Student Forum in May 2013.

Social Committee

The Social Committee organizes monthly social gatherings, which have previously included social hours, ice skating, bowling, pool parties, ice cream socials, and football tailgating. This year, they will assist in planning monthly social hours after Graduate Student Government meetings, the Taste of Grad School event in September 14, and a football tailgate on October 6.

Committee Meeting Schedule

Vice President Ralston explained the short-term schedule for committee meetings as follows. The committee would meet for the first time later in the Graduate Student Government meeting for the purpose of exchanging contact information. The appropriate Vice President will call a second meeting for each committee individually during the week of September 17 where a committee chair will be elected and the year's agenda will be discussed. Before the October Graduate Student Government meeting, committee chairs will meet jointly with their respective Vice Presidents to discuss their committee's direction for the year and inter-committee collaboration.

V. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEES

Vice President Caro introduced the committees that fall under his jurisdiction and for which he liaises with the Executive Council: Diversity, Student Life, and Sustainability.

Diversity Committee

Last year, the Diversity Committee developed a mission statement and set goals, and hosted a Diversity Luncheon series on collaboration with the Graduate Office. This year, they will be having stronger involvement with the Diversity and Equity Commission and taking directives and responding to student feedback.

Sustainability Committee

Last year, the Sustainability Committee assisted with planning and execution of the Dumpster Detour/UDon't Need It project, Earth Week activities and sneaker collection, campus tree coverage study, and building efficiency survey. The committee will continue to be involved in Dumpster Detour and Earth Week activities this year, as well as maintain involvement with ongoing project. Traditionally the committee's efforts have been in response to individual students' ideas; this year they will work to better focus priority and energy.

Student Life Committee

Last year, the Student Life Committee discussed and advocated on behalf of graduate students with respect to the International Student fee, Athletics fee, bus scheduling and the Pinebrook bus stop, and the new health plan. This year, the committee wants to discuss more inclusive representation, childcare for graduate students, and how the Graduate Student Government should implement an ombudsman process.

VI. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Parliamentarian Thomson explained that it is the Governance Committee's job to examine the internal structure, policies, and procedures of the Graduate Student Government, amend the Constitution and Bylaws, and assist Senators with the wording of bills and motions.

VI ½. EXTERNAL COMMITTEES

President Bonistall explained that there are also several opportunities for committee service outside the Graduate Student Government on university-wide initiatives: two seats on the Faculty Senate, one seat on the Parking Appeals Board, two seats on the Newark City Council, and two seats on the Graduate Students Committee.

VII. COMMITTEE BREAK OUT TIME

Senators broke out into groups according to which committee they were interested in joining. They shared their contact information and brainstormed a mutually beneficial meeting time.

VIII. SENATE FLOOR

President Bonistall introduced the Senate Floor portion of the meeting. In particular, the only people allowed to speak during Senate Floor are Senators, and she encouraged members to sit next to their Senators so their voices may still be heard. There are two types of business conducted on Senate Floor: bills, which amend the Constitution or Bylaws; and resolutions, which make a formal statement of the government.

Parliamentarian Thomson opened the Senate Floor.

Old Business

Senator Pearson moved and it was seconded to approve the Minutes from the May 10, 2012 Graduate Student Senate meeting.

Senator Portnoi asked whether the Minutes the Senate will be approving include the revision he had notified Secretary Castillo about previously. Secretary Castillo responded in the affirmative.

The Minutes were approved.

New Business

Senator Pearson moved and it was seconded to introduce Resolution SR-1213-XX, which reads:

Realizing that the University of Delaware has never previously offered a general orientation to new graduate students, and,

Understanding that the transition into graduate school can be confusing and isolating, and,

Recognizing that new graduate students would benefit from education on available academic and social resources, and,

With the hope of making the new graduate students feel more welcome on campus,

BE IT RESOLVED:

The Graduate Student Government commends the Office of Graduate and Professional Education on their efforts to put forth the first ever New Graduate Student Orientation Week, and expresses strong recommendation to continue these efforts moving forward.

Senator Ayers noted that “challenging” is a gentler way to say “confusing and isolating” and moved to amend the motion as such. The amendment passed.

Senator Harris asked about where students can get more information about what the orientation included. President Bonistall replied that during the week, one day was set aside for a student life panel and another for an academic life panel.

The resolution passed.

Senator Pearson moved and it was seconded to adjourn the Senate Floor. The motion passed and the Senate Floor closed.

IX. OPEN FLOOR: PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

President Bonistall opened the floor for public comments and concerns.

Senate Email Lists

Last year, there was a motion on the floor that the Senate email list be public for Senators. Previously Senator email addresses had been placed in the BCC line (rather than the subject line) in order to maintain everyone’s privacy. While Senators’ emails are available online, to email the entire group one has had to manually collect emails one at a time, or else ask President Bonistall to send an email to the group. The benefit of sending internal emails to Senators with their email addresses in the TO line is that they would then be able to email each other (as a group) without an intermediary. It was proposed that a group can be set up in Sakai to email Senators without showing their email addresses, or else set up an email reflector to accomplish the same goal. There were mixed opinions about the various options. In the end, the consensus was that all Senators’ email addresses will be placed in the TO line in internal emails. President Bonistall reminded everyone to use good email etiquette if emailing the whole group, and asked anyone who still has privacy concerns to contact her immediately.

Distribution of Graduate Student Government Meeting Minutes

After the Graduate Student Government meeting, the minutes are distributed through Dr. Martin to all graduate students. Once the email is sent, Senators should follow up with their constituents. The minutes will also be posted on the website.

Senator Garcia asked about revising the minutes before they are distributed. President Bonistall replied that she will email the proposed minutes to Senators, who will have several days to send her any corrections. Revisions will be noted before they are posted online.

Announcements

Member Richard clarified that the Newark Bike Project is a nonprofit organization, whereas the Newark Bike Committee is sponsored by the City of Newark.

Senator Ardini asked whether it will be a standard procedure to email a meeting reminder the day of the meeting or whether it can be distributed ahead of time. President Bonistall replied that she was not going to send an email until she was asked about the location, but she said that she can send one out on the Monday before each meeting.

The Restaurant Tour is Friday, September 14; ticket sales are already closed. There are 57 people who have bought tickets, most of whom are new students. President Bonistall thanked everyone who helped plan the event.

President Bonistall announced that the Graduate Student Government has an office: 203 Hullihen. It is a temporary location, but members were encouraged to stop by and say hello. President Bonistall has a desk there, and there is working space available for Senator use. Committee chairs are also welcome to meet there (in small groups) or use the printer for committee business.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The proxy for Senator Lazo motioned and it was seconded to adjourn. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 6:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Castillo
Graduate Student Government Secretary