

Graduate Student Government

Public Meeting Minutes

Thursday September 12th, 2013

Memorial Hall Room 127

I. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm

II. Introduction and Presidential Remarks

President Razzook welcomed the new members of the 2013-2014 academic year. It is worth mentioning how nearly 2/3rd of the members present were either newly elected into the Graduate Student Government or transitioned into their current positions. From Spring 2013 until the Fall 2013 semester, there was a very large transition of senators and members within the Graduate Student Government. He also talked about how the graduate school landscape has been changing and that education within the workplace also has been changing. He defined innovation as the creativity to solve problems and that transferring wealth is the ultimate goal in the workplace.

The blue hen committee belongs in the present and that it needs to build on what previous years and executive members have done. There are over 3,600 graduate students at the University of Delaware along with more than 160,000 alumni members and the number is growing. The graduate students deliver academic content for more than 1,000 classes and support more than \$240 million in sponsored research, which is over 1/3rd the University of Delaware's operational budget. In previous years, the GSG has managed to help with health care insurance issues/fees while also providing graduate students with the opportunity to participate in club sports.

The Graduate Student Government is being looked at to see how problems are solved regarding the problems faced by the current graduate students. Hopefully, using the framework the GSG uses for decision-making and problem solving, other industries and universities will replicate the same problem solving strategy while implementing the same techniques. The current GSG executive board and members want to set the University of Delaware example, and will have plenty of opportunities through planned events and committees to show this to the community.

Graduate students are the economic engine of the University and believe in the right and the obligation to actively participate in the formation and execution of student and university policy hence, why the GSG was established years ago. The purpose of

the GSG is to create a forum of graduate student advocacy while acting as a conduit. The GSG supports campus-wide activities facilitating graduate student professionalism and collegiality through the representation on committees, by expressing views of the student body to the administration personnel, and by issuing statements of a specific position/stance to the administration and to the media.

President Razzook also briefly explained the organizational chart of the University. The Faculty Senate runs the University from the innovation that has attracted so much creativity and eagerness for students who want to be a part of the success. This in turn, has led to the establishment of more administrative structure to accommodate so many students and faculty wanting to do research. The GSG is intended to serve the students and support the continuous engine of the University. As the senators of the organization, the senators accept the role of listening to fellow constituents while providing a voice for them.

To be an effective leader, a senator needs to listen and react while anticipating the needs of graduate students campus-wide. Behind the senators are the committee chairs and behind the committee chairs are all of the executive officers. The GSG helps put committees and events together to help spark innovation and risk-taking of graduate students here on campus. Graduate students also deal with a lot of uncertainty progressing further in their academic lives, and one way to combat this uncertainty is to create networks that help to enhance this risk-taking attitude needed to succeed. At first, success might not happen, but from our mistakes, the initial errors may be used as an advantage for the next time around.

Continuing on with his speech, President Razzook explained some of the guiding principles behind the GSG organization. Developing model solutions that are highly scalable to other Universities, communities and industries is a fundamental approach being taken by the current executive committee. Transparency, access and oversight are the keys to accountability, and as Blue Hens, are a community of people who work together, innovate, and succeed. As seen from previous years, oversight on fee-administered services needs to be implemented. It is important to work together to achieve a common goal while building collaborations and networks with external sources along the way.

Following the guiding principles that the GSG rests upon, President Razzook listed the various committees within the GSG, which include: communication, events, social, diversity, student life, sustainability, government affairs, faculty senate, diversity and equity commissions, parking and transportation, organizational delegates, governance, and the elections committee. He mentioned some of the great things some of the committees were responsible for and some of the exciting things planned for this coming academic year.

President Razzook also welcomed Assistant Provost Martin and she gave her welcoming remarks to the Graduate Student Government. She mentioned that the

organization is for graduate students, and the organization is to help graduate students make the most out of their graduate school experience. In essence, what benefits each individual graduate student, in one way or another can benefit the rest of the students on campus. She is proud to be involved with the organization for so many years and is very pleased to see its growth recently. As graduate students, she advised of the importance of getting involved on campus, with the GSG being a great starting point. As always, she mentioned her office door is always open and she encourages the support of the organization to have it benefit everyone in graduate school on campus. She concluded her remarks with wishing all the students a very happy and productive academic year.

Following Dr. Martin's welcoming statement, the Vice Provost, Dr. Richards, also gave a few welcoming remarks to the GSG members and senators. The executive officers of the GSG introduced themselves briefly and provided one piece of advice for the new members of the GSG for the upcoming academic year.

III. Membership Officer Announcements

Since the Membership Officer was unable to make the meeting, President Razzook filled in for her and passed along the membership officer announcements. The first announcement was in regards to the academic programs that don't have a designated proxy yet. Those people need to email her with the name of the person that would be a proxy for those programs that need one. The second announcement was to remind the senators, and all the members that were present, that one key element to a proxy was that they have to be a full time student in their respected academic program.

Similarly, since she was unable to make the meeting to explain the senator's responsibilities, President Razzook passed along the information. According to President Razzook, the senators are responsible for taking notes at the meetings, specifically regarding information critical to each individual program. Also the senators are responsible for disseminating meeting highlights in a formal way to their colleagues within 5 days, also remembering to copy the GSG in an email about any relevant information they feel needs to be addressed.

IV. Internal Affairs Committee Reports

Usually, this section of the meeting is filled with committee updates and progress reports. Since the committees haven't met yet, this is why all the introductions are in this section. For the next GSG meeting, there will be committee updates provided.

As the meeting progressed from the introduction section, the Vice President for Internal Affairs led a brief discussion about the committees he is in charge of. Under his control, he is in charge of the communication, events, and social committees. He explained to the GSG members at the meeting that the priority of the events scheduled for the year is to represent the desires of the graduate students and to better enhance the UD graduate student experience. He mentioned always to think about ways of finding ideas to link the events planned to the broader goals of the GSG organization.

The OGPE worked tirelessly and worked very closely with the executive council over the entire summer to plan events for this year. The events planned for this year include: the Graduate Student Gala, the Yule Tide WinterThur, the winter session meet and greet, and the Graduate Student Forum in April. All the committees essentially work together but each committee is responsible for one event. The communication committee deals with the PR aspects of the GSG and the events they sponsored. They deal with how the GSG as a whole, wants to be visually represented and they work on answering the question of how the marketing efforts are received by both the community and by fellow graduate students. This committee needs members to help get the word out and the members need to be very extroverted while being creative with marketing strategies.

The events committee is responsible for the 4th Annual Grad Student Forum. This event is being asked by the administration to do more this year from all the positive energy generated from the past years. This year the event will be held on Wednesday, April 23rd in Clayton Hall. The planning for this event will start right away since the GSG is expected to make the event another huge success like the previous years. The main goal of this committee for this year is to expand the disciplines of the students who are presenting their work. The GSG also wants to reach out to the faculty members to present on their current research. This event is a great way to network with fellow graduate students and to enhance personal scholarly endeavors.

The social committee is responsible for managing the remaining two events planned for this year along with the help from OGPE. This committee is tasked with organizing the logistics for these two events and this committee will become increasingly more important as the semester progresses. This committee has very good opportunities to build better relationships with the surrounding community.

V. Student Affairs Committee Reports

The VP of Student Affairs spoke next on the committees that fall under his control. He is in charge of the diversity, student life, and sustainability committees. He mentioned how he wants the programming to allow students the opportunity to bring forth problems and concerns that they want discussed or addressed. The brought up issues all don't need to be serious, but just issues that need to be

resolved promptly. The GSG has a goal of reaching out to the administration on campus and the administration so the graduate students concerns are heard and met. Hence, why it's very important to collaborate and maintain connections throughout the administration and to look for possible expansion opportunities.

The diversity committee in the past has had a focus on getting all the students' voices heard. Historically it is very hard to get the minority voices on campus heard. This committee is going to continue with this focus but looking for more ways to get the most diverse voice heard from all graduate students. The student life committee deals a lot with pop-up issues that graduate students face. This committee provides the connections needed with those people who make the change with the people who need or want the change. This takes a lot of effective communication. Finally, the sustainability committee deals with a lot of campus issues. There are many existing organizations on campus that deal with sustainable issues and many overlap on the issues. The GSG wants to create connections with these existing groups and needs a few more voices to help collaborate with all the various green organizations.

Moving to the External Committees, President Razzook, provided a few words for these committees. These committees require representation from the GSG; however, there are only a limited number of spots available. One of the key things the GSG has to do is to help Dr. Richards and Dr. Martin build better relations with the government affairs committee and other industries. When graduate students ask for something, they need to join forces to provide a clear and concise strong argument for change.

Finally, the GSG Parliamentarian provided a brief summary about the governance committee. He also is the chair of this committee and runs the senate floor. This committee lets the community know what the graduate students collectively want to say. This committee also helps to write the legislation to represent graduate students as a whole and to let the faculty members know what graduate students want. The biggest problem faced by this committee currently is how to make appointments for the numerous open senator spots from the unrepresented academic programs. The constitution says how to elect senators but does not mention electing appointees.

VI. External Committee Reports

Nothing was available for the first meeting of the semester.

VII. Governance Committee

Nothing was available for the first meeting of the semester.

VIII. Open Floor: Public Comments and Concerns

Time: 6:20pm

Question (Senator Jones): There was recent undergraduate support from the USG (Undergraduate Student Government) supporting President Harker's statement about the recent riot, are we going to issue one as well?

Response (President Razzook): In the future we will issue statements but currently we don't have a process in place to be able to issue these statements in a timely manner. In order to make these statements, we need to have a system in place that won't require waiting for the senators to vote during the upcoming GSG meeting. This also might require us to have a person that has PR experience.

Response: On a complete separate note, she recruited for the communications committee. She provided more details about the functionality of this committee. The communication committee looks to get the word out about events and currently this committee is looking to create a GSG brand. She needs help because she is a specialist regarding website design and isn't so great with promotional ideas. She recommended to anyone that was creative and good at art to join the committee.

Response (VP of Student Affairs): The committee chairs remember, haven't been elected yet since they only have the position for one academic year. The VP's run all the first committee meetings and pick the committee chairs during the first committee meeting. If you are interested in becoming a chair of a certain committee, contact either one of the VP's. Regarding issuing statements, there is a time lie to get things to the governance committee and general resolutions have a specific process to go through.

Response (Senator Jones): We still should issue an opinion on this issue. In my opinion, we still need to have an opinion on time sensitive issues such as the riot.

Response: Regarding the communication committee meetings, we need to make sure we have a consistent message and (Stephanie) wants to help continue what she started before she graduated.

Response (Senator Brodie): Following up with Senator Jones's question, we should create a sakai site for GSG where we can have bulletin board discussions regarding issues like these. Sakai isn't just used for academic courses. We can have impromptu discussions and a vote by the senate to take advantage of this opportunity.

Response (Senator Bonistall): There is a difference between a formal resolution and the statement from the President. We should be able to trust the president we elected to make a statement on behalf of the graduate students since that is a reason why he was elected.

IX. Senate Floor: Senators Only

At 6:30pm Old Business was presented

Two orders of business were presented. The first was to accept the motion to approve the May 9th, 2013 meeting minutes.

Senator Brodie moved and Senator Bonistall seconded to accept the Minutes from the May 9, 2013 meeting. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

The second order of business was the motion to nominate Senator Castillo as the Deputy Speaker. He would be the proxy for Isaac and sit as a de facto member of the governance committee

Senator Zimmerman moved Senator Luff seconded to accept the motion of nominating Senator Castillo the new Deputy Parliamentarian.

Senator Bonistall made a few remarks on Senator Castillo's behalf. She said he has a lot of experience within GSG and he would be great as speaker.

There was no discussion and the motion passed and Senator Castillo was elected as Deputy Speaker.

At 6:36pm Other Business was presented

Question (Senator Matija): How do we appoint new members to external committees?

Response (Parliamentarian): Take that question to the governance committee meeting.

Response (Senator Zimmerman) yielded the floor to Dr. Richards. The faculty senate is looking into a way of allowing the GSG to nominate members to sit on the faculty senate meetings and the legislation is expected to pass quickly.

Question (Senator Jones): What is the legislation timeline?

Response: The legislation needs to be written two weeks prior to the senators voting on it. Resolutions are about one week. There is a timeline to abide by which allows time for discussion of a specific matter.

Response (Senator Bonistall): She encouraged the senators to use this time to have a conversation about this type of stuff since not everyone can attend the governance

committee meetings. The legislation won't be written now but this time will allow all the senators and members to know of the issues and to help make a decision.

Response: There are new aspects to the website that provide discussion tabs and wiki links. This will allow the GSG to have discussions when random issues pop up either before or after the general meeting dates. The graduate student community will be able to see the discussion since the whole idea is to provide better and more effective ways of communication.

Response (Senator Luff): Regarding (Senator Matija) questions, to do an election process we need to know the people we are electing.

Response (Senator Matija): He is opposed to having presidential nominations and expressed the concern that the senate should appoint the members since they would be senator representatives not presidential representatives, which would be the more democratic way. Everyone on the executive committee was elected by the senators, which is the way it should continue to be.

Response (Parliamentarian): If anyone has concerns about this issue, email that to myself about the issue.

The Senate Floor closed at 6:50pm

X. Announcements

Once the meeting is over, don't forget to sign up for committees. The sheets will be around the room regarding the various committee options.

The next general meeting is October 10th, 2013 in Memorial Hall Room 127

Starting a 5pm before the general meeting, refreshments and a social gathering will be provided until 5:30pm when the meeting starts.

XI. Adjournment at 6:53pm