

GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT
Public Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2013

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

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

Presidential Remarks

President Bonistall announced and congratulated the members of next year's Executive Council who had been elected: Alexander Ames, Vice President of Internal Affairs; Cesar Caro, Vice President of Student Affairs; Sharelle Law, Membership Officer; Isaac Harris, Parliamentarian.

She also announced that President Harker's annual reception would take place on May 13 from noon to 1:30 pm at the President's House. All outgoing and incoming Senators are invited; an RSVP link will be sent by email.

Although incoming officers were scheduled to transition into their new roles in April, with the re-vote of Presidential election and the Secretary position still open, the transition has been postponed until May.

President Bonistall followed up with Richard Rind, Director of Parking Services, following the resolution passed the Graduate Student Government Senate in March; he was very appreciative.

She stated that the feedback she received regarding the email list was to keep it closed; it will remain closed for the remainder of the academic year. She also noted that this issue would be discussed with the incoming Executive Council.

Secretary Candidate Speech

Brian Gildemeyer, running for Secretary, gave a speech and answered questions.

Insurance Update: Jessica Chason

The University is renewing the entire student health insurance policy. Highlights include the maximum benefit rising by \$1 million and the rates decreasing. Additionally, prescriptions are included as part of the maximum benefit, part-time students are eligible, and the insurance covers dependents. The student rate is \$1473, and only \$200 for funded students. The rate for students with dependents is \$4203 for students with one dependent, and \$6158 for students with two.

President Bonistall noted that the current coverage is \$1 million per incident and \$2 million per policy year under the current plan.

There will be a \$50 deductible per injury/sickness, with 80% covered until \$2000 (out of pocket), and 100% covered to the maximum. There is now only one plan; there are no more separate blue or gold plans.

Vice Provost Richards summarized that the cost is going down while the coverage is going up, and that this trend can continue as long as graduate students stay healthy.

Senator Lazo noted that Student Life is interested in prescriptions not being reimbursed and asked whether this could be considered for the future. Ms. Chason replied that it has been discussed, and that she would take the recommendation back with her.

Senator Jones asked whether there was vision or dental coverage. There are no changes to the current plans, although there were changes recommended to improve the dental plan so that students pay less out of pocket.

Senator Zimmerman asked about the deadline for enrollment. Ms. Chason replied that the University is going to hard waiver system: every student is required to be insured. The deadline for enrollment in the insurance plan or signing of the waiver is September 10; students will be automatically enrolled, or they can choose to waive out of it. This might be why the price is decreasing; an additional factor is that the University had a good claims experience last year.

Senator Lazo asked whether the coverage is nationwide or just in Delaware. The coverage is global. President Bonistall replied that she has used the University's insurance plan in Ohio, although it was not as easy as using it locally.

Senator Tellez asked whether students would be insured over the summer break. Yes, the plan begins on August 15, 2013 and runs through August 14, 2014. Student can also enroll earlier this year.

Senator Jones stated that it is inaccurate to say students are not getting as sick; they are just forced to go to the Student Health Center, and Student Health Services does not bill insurance for lab services since the student health fee subsidizes this.

Senator Luff replied that she has had the opposite experience: the plan has covered a lot of expenses not covered on other plans.

Ms. Chason encouraged everyone to read the entire brochure for the plan.

Vice President Caro asked whether the overlap in dates would cause logistical difficulties. Ms. Chason replied that the University is a new launching new website, and that students can enroll beginning around May. Students will have until the drop/add deadline (on September 10) to enroll or opt out.

Senator Brodie asked whether graduate students could payroll deduct cost of health plan. Dr. Martin replied in the affirmative. Senator Tellez replied that there is a \$50 fee for this.

Senator Chakraborty asked for additional information about the insurance waiver. Students only need to waive once each year, in the fall. Students who purchase the plan in the fall are automatically enrolled in spring. Students who experience "qualifying events" are eligible for enrollment (after the fall deadline) at prorated rate; details are explained on the new website.

Senator Lazo asked whether aging out of parents' insurance is a qualifying event. Ms. Chason replied in the affirmative.

Senator Portnoi asked whether a dependent could be enrolled on an existing plan after the initial enrollment period. Ms. Chason replied that a dependent could be added for qualifying event, such as having a baby. Senator Portnoi asked why a policy could not be changed mid-term.

Senator Migdal replied that policies cannot be changed mid-term since in this case it would seem like a medical issue arose.

II. ELECTIONS UPDATE

Officer Dahl announced the officers who had been elected: Alexander Ames, Vice President of Internal Affairs; Cesar Caro, Vice President of Student Affairs; Sharelle Law, Membership Officer; Isaac Harris, Parliamentarian. Polls will open for the Secretary position at 9:00 pm following the meeting and will close at 9:00 pm on April 18; she also noted that the Secretary candidate's biography is online.

She explained that the presidential revote was needed due to a technical error. Attendance is mandatory in order for Senators to maintain active standing, and five senators went inactive after March 21 Special Elections Meeting. The third party conducting the elections did not remove these inactive senators prior to poll link being sent, and responses were collected without an identifier so that these five votes could not be removed from the count. The Elections Committee decided that a revote would be best option to elect a president.

Senator Berg asked whether five votes were enough to sway the vote for President. Officer Dahl replied in the affirmative.

Officer Dahl noted that most candidates ran for their positions unopposed, and that the victor in the Vice President of Internal Affairs race led significantly and was not impacted by a five-vote margin.

Senator Tellez asked how the Senators were made inactive. Officer Dahl replied that those Senators did not fulfill their constitutionally required duties. She notified those individuals of their inactivity and explained how they could reinstate their seats. She emphasized that Senators need to be present at meetings in order to represent their constituents.

After the re-vote, there was a tie for President. She congratulated both candidates for being seen by the Senate as qualified to lead the organization. After deliberation, the Elections Committee proposed the following tie-breaking procedure: the presidential candidates would debate each other at a special meeting to be held within the next several weeks. They would discuss a number of topics regarding the Graduate Student Government and the University of Delaware in general. Senators would receive a link to cast their votes following the debate, and there would be a 48-hour period where the polls would be open.

Senator Brodie asked whether the debate could be recording using UD Capture. Officer Dahl responded in the affirmative. Proxies would be expected to attend if the Senators could not, but the debate would be available to re-watch.

Vice President Caro asked about the contingency in the case of another tie. Officer Dahl replied that there are not an even number of Senators, and hence that if there is still a tie, some Senator is abstaining. Candidates will keep campaigning until a victor is determined.

The proxy for Senator Goldsmith asked whether a roll call could be made. Senator Rice replied that ballot voting will continue for now, but that after going through the process several more times, a roll call vote will be held.

Senator Stolz asked whether Senators could submit a handwritten ballot at the special meeting. Officer Dahl replied that while that is indeed more efficient, if a Senator sends a proxy, then the

Senator would not get to vote. She emphasized that the Senators must (personally) represent their constituents.

Senator Zimmerman asked whether the Senate could elect two presidents. Officer Dahl replied that it is possible to have co-presidents, but that the Elections Committee decided against that option.

Senator Migdal suggested capping the number of re-votes, and letting the incoming Executive Council cast the tie-breaking vote after a certain period of stalemate. Senator Rice replied that this scenario is discussed in Robert's Rules, and that the Executive Council would be allowed to vote once, as a group, as if it were a Senator.

Senator Jones noted that most of the current Executive Council has already worked with Secretary Castillo, but not with Senator Razzook, and that members of the incoming Executive Council would not be able to vote again if they had already voted as Senators.

It was suggested that the Elections Committee document the solution so that this issue does not happen again.

Senator Lazo noted that the Senate has seen the candidates speak but not debate, and she asked whether the debate could be written. Officer Dahl replied that the Elections Committee discussed having the candidates write a letter to Senators addressing particular questions. Vice President Ralston remarked that it would be beneficial to see the candidates debate face-to-face.

Senator Migdal asked how the debate topics would be determined. The Elections Committee was open to having questions submitted.

The proxy for Senator Goldsmith suggested that, as a compromise, a date for the debate be set two weeks out, but that another election be held before the meeting in order possibly to avoid having to have another meeting.

Senator Brodie asked whether the existing poll could be extended. Officer Dahl replied that all Senators who had not voted were sent a reminder before the polls closed and that the results have been submitted; some Senators may have abstained.

Senator Zimmerman remarked that more meetings might decrease numbers of Senators voting because graduate students are busy. She noted that resolution sooner is better, and she spoke in favor of another re-vote soon.

Senator Brodie noted that Senators have a responsibility to serve their constituents, and that debate serves this purpose. Candidates should have the opportunity to present themselves.

Senator Portnoi recommended a motion on Senate Floor stating what the course of action should be. Officer Dahl replied that the Elections Committee would make the decision.

President Bonistall explained that the Elections Committee has autonomy to conduct the election. The committee is sharing this information and discussion options in order to solicit feedback. Senator Rice added that the committee is trying to be transparent about the process. Candidates have not had input into the process thus far because they should not dictate how the election is to be run.

Senator Lazo stated that the Graduate Student Government has a process which has worked in the past has worked, and that abstentions might be reduced with one more vote.

The proxy for Senator Goldsmith stated his support for the committee's decision, and he implored them to consider a swift resolution.

Senator Brodie stated that Senators should not feel pressured if they abstained and they still do not know whom to choose. Officer Dahl remarked that a debate would be appropriate if Senators are still unsure of their choice.

Officer Dahl summarized the discussion: the Elections Committee will deliberate and consider Senators' opinions as it decides on a course of action. Senators will receive an email specifying details.

Vice Provost Richards asked what the motivation for a Senator to change his vote is in the absence of additional information. Officer Dahl replied that the goal is not so much to encourage Senators to change their votes, as it is to encourage those who have abstained to participate.

Parliamentarian Thomson noted that some Senators who were inactive would be active for this election, and that if they missed the speeches, their only source of information is the candidate biographies. Officer Dahl replied that Senators are able to speak to candidates, and that it is their responsibility to reach out if they feel they need more information.

Polls will open for Senate elections at 9:00 pm following the meeting. Every graduate student will receive a link by email allowing him to vote for the Senator for his particular academic program. Officer Dahl noted that there were 53 nominations accepted for Senator from 46 programs, which is better participation than this past year.

II. INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Communication Committee – Senator Reid

Vice President Ralston gave the report for Senator Reid. The Communication Committee has been reorganized, and it is working on redesigning the website and developing marketing strategies to promote the Graduate Student Government. The next committee meeting is April 24 at 1:30 pm at BrewHaHa.

Events Committee – Member Ames

Member Ames announced that the Graduate Forum schedule is finalized and that there are changes in the event structure this year due to high response. To accommodate the 56 presentations scheduled, the event will be split between the Roselle Center for the Arts and Lerner Hall, with two panels during each session. The Events Committee decided to reinstate the poster session based on student feedback. Presenters will be required to submit their presentations two weeks in advance.

The committee is currently seeking raffle donations from local businesses, including gift certificates to restaurants, grocery stores, cultural events, and Central Parking Permit. Member Ames also solicited volunteer help for day of the event: volunteers are needed to staff the registration desk and moderate panels. He explained that moderators keep time, assist with logistics during the presentation, and help transition Power Point presentations. Senator Lazo

added that the job is “super-easy”. Anyone who is available can email Member Ames at alames@udel.edu.

Vice President Ralston added that registration information will be available soon, and that registration will be open for about two weeks.

Social Committee – Senator Nelan and Senator Markland

Vice President Ralston gave the report for Senators Nelan and Markland. The Social Committee thanked everyone who attended the happy hour over spring break.

The committee is currently organizing a tour of South Campus on April 26. There are two tours available: one at 3:00 pm and one at 4:00 pm. Attendees can participate in one or both tours, but must RSVP using the link in the forthcoming flyer. Everyone who registers will get free ice cream at the conclusion of the tours.

Kildare’s has offered to host another happy hour with discounted prices on appetizers; more information will be announced soon.

III. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEES

Diversity Committee – Senator London & Senator Moinolmolki

Senator Moinolmolki reported that the Diversity Committee was able to distribute a recruitment letter to all graduate students, and that it has already hosted two successful Diversity Luncheons on March 22 and April 5. The final Luncheon is scheduled for April 12, and the Panel Discussion will be on May 3.

Student Life Committee – Senator Razzook & Senator Levy

Vice President Caro gave the report for Senators Razzook and Levy.

The Student Life Committee has been discussion implementation of the Athletics fee. The fee is happening, so the best the committee can do is try to steer the services and types of equipment that the University will be providing with the fees.

The committee has also been discussion collaboration with Resident Student Organizations, Club Sports, and Health and Wellness; involvement with Graduate Student Orientation; and timesheets and graduate student contracts.

Sustainability Committee – Senator Cario & Member Gildemeyer

Vice President Caro gave the report for Senators Cario and Gildemeyer.

The Sustainability Committee is still communicating with Dining Services regarding the availability of vegetarian options for catering. It is waiting for approval to distribute the office comfort level survey, which will go out to all graduate students by email. The committee will use

the results of the survey to help Facilities identify areas of concern and make suggestions for adjustment.

The Dumpster Detour project will take place May 22-24; the committee is soliciting volunteers participate in planning and operations aspects of the project. Anyone interested in volunteering can email Vice President Caro at ccaro@udel.edu, Senator Cario at acario@udel.edu, or Senator Gildmeyer at bgild@udel.edu.

The Earth Week Green Expo will take place April 17 from noon to 2:00 pm in Trabant. The committee will have a table set up to talk about its projects and collect athletic shoes (size 7 and up) for the MORE Foundation Group. Students interested in donating can drop off used shoes at Trabant or email Anthony Cario at acario@udel.edu or Heather Thomson at hthomson@udel.edu to arrange another drop off time.

IV. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Parliamentarian Thomson recapped several discussions the Governance Committee has had during the past month.

Regarding quorum, she noted that the Senate has had difficulty reaching quorum this semester. Some Senators have had excused absences due to classes, and there has been some feeling that these Senators should not count towards the total when defining quorum. The committee debated introducing an amendment that would specifically define quorum and how to account for excused absences. Governance anticipated that the Executive Council would be discussing this issue over the summer, so it was not discussed further.

Regarding a consent agenda, the Executive Council is already planning to implement this, so a resolution is not necessarily needed for this to happen. She remarked that the Senate can still enact a resolution in support of the idea, which would give the Executive Committee encouragement to continue to pursue it.

A bill will be introduced on Senate Floor to amend the Bylaws to allow for their suspension. Specifically, the amendment will allow the Senate to suspend specific clauses of the Bylaws for a limited period of time if 2/3 of the body agrees that it is necessary.

A bill will also be introduced to amend the Bylaws to eliminate the Special Elections Meeting, which would force elections business to be conducted during the regular March meeting unless a special meeting is called. The committee is hesitant to recommend passage of this amendment because it feels that the amendment will make the March meeting unnecessarily long.

V. EXTERNAL COMMITTEES

Newark City Council – Member Graham

Elections for City Council were held on April 9; Margaret Haddon, a University of Delaware employee, was elected to represent District 4, which geographically encompasses the campus.

Member Graham noted that many City Council decisions are made at ancillary meetings that City Council does not have power to change. She expressed interest in visiting these meetings to find out what they are about, and recommended that interested graduate students be paired with appropriate committees.

The City is currently in the process of reviewing its comprehensive plan, and there will be a meeting to solicit community feedback regarding transportation on April 23 at 7:00 pm at the Newark Municipal Building.

The City of Newark has an online presence on Twitter: @CityofNewarkDE; and on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CityOfNewarkDelaware>
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Things-To-Do-In-Newark-Delaware/118269434890308>
<https://www.facebook.com/DowntownNewarkPartnership>

Member Graham asked that any graduate students who know of or are participating in collaborations between the University of Delaware and the City of Newark to keep her informed; she can be reached by email at jbgraham@udel.edu.

Faculty Senate – Senator Portnoi & Senator Jones

Senator Portnoi referred the Senate to report printed in the agenda. He added that President Harker spoke at the last Faculty Senate meeting about money, and that the Faculty Senate continued to discuss money afterwards. The perception is that tuition is already high enough, and that many government agencies are not giving funding due to the sequester.

Senator Luff asked whether the University is no longer paying for extra graduate classes for funded students. Vice Provost Richards replied that there has been discussion about removing graduate tuition cap and replacing it with a single rate for full-time graduate students, where they would pay for classes by credit. This proposal is designed to address issues in professional degree programs, and will not affect students on contract; graduate students who receive 50%+ tuition are considered “on contract” for purposes of the cap. This policy may be phased in with scholarships, so current students may not even feel these effects; he noted that it is still in the debate stage.

Diversity and Equity Commission – President Bonistall

President Bonistall reported that the Diversity and Equity Commission did not meet in March, and that its last meeting will be on April 22. Members of the commission were given reflection questions for homework.

Organizational Delegate Updates

Representative Remy reported that the Black Graduate Student Association held a community service event on March 23 at Sunday Breakfast Mission in Wilmington; it is looking to continue this as a regular event. There was a general body meeting on April 4, where there was a discussion about gun violence. There will be another community service event on April 27 cleaning up storm water channels and planting trees on Paper Mill Road behind Jenny’s Run.

President Bonistall recommended that the Social Committee discuss adding more community service to its programming.

VII. OPEN FLOOR: PUBLIC COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Discussion: Draft of Tobacco-Free Campus Policy

Senator Zimmerman stated that she still cannot understand what the definition of on-campus means.

Senator Lazo noted that her constituents had significant concerns about enforcements, and that they found the regulation prohibiting use of tobacco product inside personal vehicles was “unusual”. She believes that the policy is not written in an understandable or enforceable way.

Senator Jones noted that the language regarding about cost of enforcement is vague. Enforcement is intended to be educational.

The proxy for Senator Goldsmith asked whether students are in violation of the policy if they are not enforcing it.

Senator Lazo noted that the policy prohibits any tobacco product, including smokeless tobacco, while enforcement is justified only for health or nuisance reasons. In particular, electronic cigarettes are banned even though their use is in accordance with the stated justification of the policy.

President Bonistall responded that the conversation is that there needs to be campus community buy-in to the policy, and that the campus community will collectively enforce it. In particular, the vagueness of the enforcement section is intentional.

Senator Rice asked to whom a complaint will be made and by whom the policy will be enforced if someone is in violation. President Bonistall replied that The Office of Student Conduct will handle student violations of the policy.

Senator McCormack stated that she feels that the enforcement provisions are reasonable, and that they will create a burden on supervisors.

Senator Lazo asked what power the Office of Student Conduct has to enforce the policy among visitors, faculty, and staff. President Bonistall replied that faculty and staff are accountable to their immediate supervisor, and visitors will be asked to comply.

Representative Remy asked whether the policy document is publicly available. President Bonistall replied that the document was circulated among Senators, but that it is still in draft form and not yet publicly available.

Senator Tellez asked whether a student survey has been distributed, and who has decided to implement the policy. Vice Provost Richards replied that the undergraduate Student Government Association initiated the policy, and its support was unanimous. The intent was to distribute a survey, but it never went out. The University of Delaware is behind the curve on this issue compared to other institutions nationwide.

Senator Tellez asked how Student Government Association decided to pursue this policy. President Bonistall replied that the Student Government Association distributed a survey to students and received 1200 responses, and asked the Graduate Student Government to pass a resolution on the issue in the fall. President Bonistall reiterated that the Graduate Student Government would not support such a policy until it hears graduate student input. A survey has

never been distributed for graduate students or for faculty and staff. The policy itself came out of the Office of Student Life.

Representative Remy recommended that the Graduate Student Government impress on the Office of Student Life the need to distribute a survey, since it has bypassed all non-undergraduates. President Bonistall replied that if the whole point of enforcement is campus community buy-in, then the whole campus community should be involved. Vice Provost Richards remarked that the Office of Student Life could help the Graduate Student Government conduct a survey.

President Bonistall asked what such a survey would be asking and what the organization hopes to accomplish by it.

Parliamentarian Thomson raised a concern that some students will disrespect the policy. Vice Provost Richards replied that students who disrespect the policy would be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

Member Ames noted that “enforcement” is not an appropriate word, given the nature of the policy. He recommended that the draft be revisited in conjunction with the Student Government Association to clarify various issues before a survey is distributed. He recommended language encouraging compliance rather than language about policy enforcement.

Vice Provost Richards stated that this policy is not targeting students, and that he suspects it will have more effect on staff than students.

President Bonistall noted that health and wellness groups on campus were represented in the discussion, and that there are programs available to help current smokers quit.

Senator McCormack stated that it is important to contact staff and suggested that the Graduate Student Government be distributed to staff as well as graduate students. Vice Provost Richards said that the staff would probably be open to this.

The proxy for Senator Goldsmith cautioned the Senate to be careful not to hijack the initiative. He suggested that the Graduate Student Government present solution first and then offer to help the Student Government Association accomplish the solution.

Representative Remy requested that information about the policy be disseminated before the survey is distributed to allow students time to inform themselves.

President Bonistall asked what percentage of graduate students needs to disagree with the policy for the Senate to not support it. She suggested that there may be more merit in education, and that she feels that the policy will be enacted regardless of graduate student opinion.

Senator Brodie asked what power the Graduate Student Government has to affect this policy. President Bonistall replied that this would be a university policy. Vice Provost Richards stated that the Student Government Association requested that the Office of Student Life create this policy and that it will appear before the Faculty Senate before it is approved.

Member Ames recommended that information about tobacco cessation be a part of the policy. Vice Provost Richards assured him that this would happen.

President Bonistall announced that she would share notes from the discussion with policy-makers.

Open Floor

Senator Brodie raised a concern that Payroll had messed up graduate student paychecks again. He is frustrated that the response is the same: that the problem will be fixed on the next period. He noted that this causes financial hardships for graduate students and asked whether this can be fixed.

Representative Remy suggested that since payroll should be computerized, the glitch should be able to be fixed.

The proxy for Senator Goldsmith noted that there is probably a large cost associated with issuing special checks.

Vice Provost Richards replied that the software is rigid and that it is not easy to issue anything off-cycle. Payroll is frustrated and embarrassed, and there is not much that can be done about it. Dr. Martin stated that her office can help students in need make up missing money, which will be payroll deducted from future paychecks.

President Bonistall asked whether there is anything the Graduate Student Government can do proactively. Vice Provost Richards suggested that someone from Payroll be invited to the May meeting.

Senator Pearson recommended that this information be disseminated to graduate students. President Bonistall agreed, and urged Senators to highlight Dr. Martin's availability to help.

Dr. Martin noted that the error usually occurs at the change of semester; the date the system uses needs to be the appropriate date.

Vice Provost Richards stated that he would convey to appropriate administrators the urgency of addressing the problem.

VIII. SENATE FLOOR

Old Business

Senate Floor was opened at 7:34 pm.

Senator Portnoi moved and it was seconded to approve the minutes from March 14, 2013. The motion passed.

Bill: Suspension of the Bylaws

It was moved by Senator Portnoi and seconded to introduce SB-1213-02, which reads as follows:

Whereas circumstances may arise that require expediency or flexibility of the governing body, and,

Whereas standard procedure may inhibit or delay necessary action,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Article VII of the University of Delaware Graduate Student Government Bylaws be amended as follows:

Article VII: Bylaw Suspension

(a) Any clause of the above Bylaws may be suspended by a 2/3 vote of the Senate body for a specified period of time and a specified purpose.

Vice Richards asked whether the wording should be amended to allow for approval of suspension by 2/3 of attending Senators. Senator Pearson replied that the quorum discussion has been tabled, so the wording was left as is.

Senator Rice asked whether this motion came out of the elections discussion. Parliamentarian Thomson replied that earlier in this elections cycle, there was a desire to eliminate the Special Elections Meeting, and that doing so would have required suspension of the Bylaws because the bylaws dictate that the organization have such a meeting.

Senator Rice asked whether it would be difficult to do to suspend the Bylaws. Senator Pearson replied that amendments to the Bylaws require a 2/3 vote of Senators present, if quorum is met. He suggested that the Senate discuss whether such a vote be defined as 2/3 of those present if quorum is met versus 2/3 of all Senators.

Senator Portnoi motioned to amend the bill to remove “of the senate body” and replace it with “of senators present”. Senator Lazo recommended that the Senate make sure the document is self-consistent. Senator Berg agreed, and he recommended that the Senate should only strike the word “body”. Senator Portnoi motioned to amendment the bill to only remove the word “body”.

Senator Luff asked whether the Senate can what is meant by a “2/3 vote” in the future.

Senator Stolz asked whether the word “body” affects the vote. Parliamentarian Thomson replied that the wording is as it is primarily to be consistent within the Bylaws.

Senator Portnoi recommended that the Senate make the wording in this bill correct. Senator Rice agreed, stating that the Senate should vote on this bill with the best wording possible.

Senator Pearson clarified that the intention of the “2/3 vote” language in the Bylaws was that amendments to the Bylaws and Constitutions were to be voted on by all senators in active standing. He stated that he would personally be tolerant of the vote for Bylaws suspension being a little lax, but the phrase “any Bylaws” implies that Bylaws regarding impeachment may be suspended, which would impinge on individuals’ rights. He motioned that the wording of the bill be amended to strike “body” and replace with “present”, so that the phrase reads: “2/3 of the senators present”. This amendment passed.

Senator Lazo motioned to refer the bill to the Governance Committee to correct the issues that emerged in the foregoing discussion. The motion was passed and the bill was referred back to Governance.

Bill: Removal of the Special Elections Meeting

It was moved by Senator Portnoi and seconded to introduce SB-1213-03, which reads as follows:

Whereas the By-Laws provide for regular meetings of the Graduate Student Government, and,

Whereas it is in the best interest of the organization and its constituents that the meetings be productive in their use of time, efficient, and that all business be conducted within regular meeting time, and,

Whereas the By-Laws already provide mechanisms for calling special meetings,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The following section of the University of Delaware Graduate Student Government By-Laws be amended as follows:

Article IV (Elections and Appointments), Section 2, subsection c, which previously read as follows:

(c) Elections Timeline: An elections committee shall be formed in the January meeting. Nominations are due to the elections committee by the February meeting. A special elections meeting will be held one week after the March meeting and the online polls will open that evening. Polls will be open for one week, and the victors will be announced to the entire GSG within 24 hours of polls closing. The outgoing and incoming Executive Councils shall run the April meeting together. The incoming Executive Council shall be formally sworn in at the May meeting and will run the May meeting.

Shall now read:

(c) Elections Timeline: An elections committee shall be formed in the January meeting. Nominations are due to the elections committee by the February meeting. Elections business will be conducted at the March meeting and the online polls will open that evening. Polls will be open for one week, and the victors will be announced to the entire GSG within 24 hours of polls closing. The outgoing and incoming Executive Councils shall run the April meeting together. The incoming Executive Council shall be formally sworn in at the May meeting and will run the May meeting.

Senator Berg noted that the Special Elections Meeting was long, and the regular March meeting was also long. He suggested that a consent agenda might help, but that it would be unduly long to hold both meetings on the same night.

Senator Portnoi remarked that the Graduate Student Government has one regular meeting each month, and that it needs to strive to do all of its business in that amount of time. Graduate students have a lot of other priorities that take up their time. Since the Senate tabled a motion to suspend the Bylaws, and since officers have the power to call a special meeting, the Bylaws should set the rule and not the exception; a special meeting is an exception and it should not be legislated in the Bylaws. It is easier to call a special meeting than to cancel an unnecessary one.

Senator Stolz noted that elections business might not always require a special meeting.

Senator Pearson noted that because graduate students are so busy, having the special elections meeting scheduled in advance allows Senators to mark their calendars and prepare, rather than not being able to prepare for a hastily called special meeting. He stated that he is in favor of

keeping the special elections meeting as it is legislated and instead working on Bylaws suspension issue.

The motion failed.

Resolution: Consent Agenda

Senator Pearson moved and it was seconded to introduce SR-1213-03, which reads as follows:

Believing that the GSG has the potential to be an organization that can make some significant differences for graduate students across the University of Delaware, and,

Believing that the current meeting format requires too much time spent on the routine, procedural, informational, and self-explanatory non-controversial items on the agenda, and,

Understanding that adopting a consent agenda format will increase the amount of time available to discuss and address issues and concerns vital to the graduate student community,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Graduate Student Senate encourages the Executive Council to pursue the use of a consent agenda in future meetings of the Graduate Student Government.

There was no discussion, and the motion passed.

It was moved and seconded to close Senate Floor. The motion was approved.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senator Jones asked whether a consent agenda would be used for the next meeting. President Bonistall replied that a consent agenda probably would not be used since the Executive Council will be transitioning, but she encouraged next year's Executive Council to pursue a consent agenda.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Castillo
Graduate Student Government Secretary