

GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Public Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2013

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

II. GUEST SPEAKERS

The GSG General Meeting started with a representative from the University of Delaware Payroll coming and explaining the recent tax issues faced by many graduate students over the last few months.

- The FICA eligibility and subjectivity is based on the registration status of a graduate student on campus
 - During the summer students are subject to social security taxes and other taxes that can be withheld because they aren't a fully registered student
 - The sooner you are registered for the fall semester, the less chance you will be affected regarding FICA taxes coming out of your paychecks
 - Send an email to PR-staff@udel.edu if you have any problems, and several staff members regarding any concerns of registration and taxes monitor this email
 - This problem can happen during any year, but once a new school year starts, there is nothing that can be done about the previous year
 - Question: Is all this information available on the website?
 - Response: It is/was assumed that since the undergraduate students know, that the graduate students should know.
 - Question: What registration period is looked at regarding tax exemptions?
 - Response: In the summer, students have to take at least 3 credits to be exempted. The fall registration pertains to the fall semester and the spring registration pertains to the spring semester. The only exception is the 5-week transition period from the fall to the spring semester. The FICA tax process starts at the beginning of the semester and ends on the last day of classes and runs every day.
 - Question: This seems to have happened a few times to a bunch of people, are there any recommendations to not let this happen again?
 - Response: This time was just a matter of people not being registered on time for the semester. The first time was a payroll issue, which has to be coordinated with the computing center that runs the entire process. The FICA taxes were refunded for everyone regarding the internal payroll issue.

- Question: Is there a way to send out a gentle reminder about registration deadlines and the possible consequences? Maybe a more proactive way rather than a reactive one?
- Response: The free drop/add period ended on the 10th and some people were missed when the system ran on the 11th. Be mindful that the registration period for graduate students just opened as of today.
- Question: Is there a way to get refunds quicker?
- Response: That would be asking for an off cycle check that isn't normal. Send an email to Pr-staff@udel.edu along with any details explaining any financial hardships due to a loss of money on a check.
- Question: If you get taxes taken out is the money gone for good?
- Response: The money is gone because it is social security.
- Question: Does missing a paycheck force students into a higher tax bracket?
- Response: If that happens, you can increase your W4 exception for the pay period and then you can put your exemptions back to where they were before the missed paycheck. You can claim as many exemptions as you want, which reduces the amount of taxes taken out. This happens to a lot of grounds keepers and maintenance workers.
- Question: Is it worthwhile to send out an email linking each student's paycheck to his or her paystub?
- Response: There doesn't seem to be a way at this time that it can be programmed into the system?
- Question: Is there anyway to have Dr. Martin's office send out a link at the beginning of the semester reminding students of the importance of registration?
- Response: A request will be made to see if there is a way to send out a reminder. When a student has had taxes taken out, they can get them refunded when filing their 2013 taxes. Previously, it was a payroll issue that was taken care of, and the problem should only happen if a student registers late.
- Question: How far in advance does payroll start processing the payroll information?
- Response: The money has to be in the bank two days before, sometimes three when there is a double pay period. The schedule is not available on the website rather it is an internal thing.

III. MEMBERSHIP OFFICER ANNOUNCEMENTS

For any new senators present today, please see Sharelle Law about designating a proxy.

IV. INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Social Committee – Gabrielle Vicari

- Tomorrow is the Gala which sold out twice with approximately 186 tickets
- Volunteers needed at 44 Kent Way at 5:30pm
- If you can't go and have a ticket, please share that information with those that want to buy tickets
- Yuletide is coming up and 12 VIP tickets are going to be given out to friends and administration of GSG and to faculty that are most deserving
- Publicity has come through and the committee is working on daily updates for the event through Facebook

Events Committee – Joe Brodie

- Regarding the Forum, a "Call for Papers" will be distributed December 2nd
- Business cards were distributed to every member. There are plenty more if needed
- The keynote speaker works as a hiring consultant for both industry and for academia and will show different ways of marketing for employment
- The evening speaker is still in the process of being finalized

Communications Committee – Stephanie Luff

- Flyers were passed out for Yuletide
- The branding initiative will be voted on during the open floor so everyone has a say

V. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Diversity Committee – Holly Johnson & Katie Minker

- Last year students did a good job with the GOOD panel and the report that was dispersed, especially to see how much progress has been made since last year
- The committee is building themselves and are brainstorming ideas how to move forward
 - Also looking at ways and ideas to build information and to gather it
 - Getting to the truth of things and reaching out to all the students to see what they need

Student Life Committee – Akisha Jones & Nick Levy

- Meeting next Thursday
- Looking for two representatives to start exploring the issues brought up in the general meetings
 - Health insurance, health service fee, student recreational fee etc.
- Want to foster conversations to get more out of fees that graduate students have to pay

Sustainability Committee – George Honchar & Anthony Cario

- The committee doesn't think that the STAR campus should be opposed rather should work to improve efficiency and green coverage to make proposal better
- Working on building better community relationships
- Focus shouldn't be against progress, rather progress should be as responsible as possible
- Undergraduate student government worked on doing research comparing Delaware to other campuses in the country working on creating an office of sustainability
 - Evaluation is in progress regarding aspects the GSG agrees and disagrees with and will be re-proposed once things are finalized

VI. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Deputy Parliamentarian Castillo:

- Several pieces of legislation are planned for this general meeting
- Discussed two things that don't have resolutions but will be opened up on senate floor
- It will be kept closed but when it is on the open floor, it will foster healthy discussion about the senate pieces coming forward
- The GSG will continue with the current email policy which requires all emails to be filtered through the President before they are sent out to the members

VII. EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Government Affairs Committee – Jessica Graham

- Several senators have volunteered but they haven't been nominated yet
- Divided up the city of Newark responsibilities: downtown development, building codes, parks and recreation etc.
- Newark conference regarding the vision of the city over the next 5 years
- Talked about building codes, apartment safety and landlord behavior
- Reporting all things that bother us graduate students to Newark so they are aware of annoyances
- Finding the connecting link that will allow for communication with people already doing things around Newark

- New trend of people shifting jobs multiple times and the graduate students are starting to live in the area for a longer period of time compared to the city residents and this opportunity has a lot of potential

Faculty Senate – Akisha Jones & Louis Awad

- Student life committee focused on the September 9th incident
 - Letter from president to chair of the committee expressing concern of the issue to Police Chief Ogden
 - The police and city did a lot to uncover the investigative measures and the committee didn't want to do a further investigation
- Pedestrian and transportation has increased on laird campus and now with the new STAR campus expanding in size
 - There is a concern that students won't have enough time in between classes
 - Driving is impossible and a few problem areas have been identified
- Public safety and public perception of safety was another issue
 - Police Chief can explain much better about the federal guidelines and the purpose of the multiple transparent and informative alerts students receive
- Chief Ogden is scheduled to speak at the next meeting

Graduate Studies Committee – Akisha Jones & Matija Madovic

- On October 25th, there was a proposal to elect faculty senate members and the proposal passed
- New degrees will be established but was tabled for the next meeting
 - PhD in Climatology
 - Geography concentrations were eliminated and Geography and Climatology are separate PhD programs
 - JPMorgan is establishing a PhD degree program in Financial System and Analytics with a \$10million jumpstart
 - Problem was about who will be the program advisor and the process of establishing them
 - Main issue of member son committee was that they did not want JPMorgan to have influence on the academic world but the motion passed for Fall 2014
 - Anatomy and Clinical Health Science will create a terminal degree so students don't need to pursue a PhD

College of Arts & Sciences Faculty Senate – Stephanie Luff

- Waiting on an email regarding a meeting, but haven't heard anything yet

Diversity and Equity Commission – Alex Razzook

- Brainstormed ideas for initiative of three main strategies that want to be accomplished
- Diversity is decentralized but it is important to communicate information between the various groups working on projects to reduce redundancy

Parking & Transportation Committee – Nick Levy

- Many parking issues are in student life awaiting to be discussed

Organizational Delegates

Roddel Remy:

- BGSA had a community service event where trees were planted at a local high school
 - Happened on October 26th and at the same time there was a conference called “Complexities of Color” which was a follow through of the George Zimmerman trial and the role race plays in society
 - On the 28th, there was a panel held that invited undergraduates to converse about anything they wanted to hear and to establish communications with other minority undergraduates
 - Biggest event of the year is the annual potluck event on the 22nd of November at 6pm in Trabant 209-211
 - RSVP and say what food you are bringing
 - Collecting canned food goods to donate to charity

VIII. OPEN FLOOR: PUBLIC COMMENTS & CONCERNS

- President Razzook opened the floor by stating that 9 months ago he hatched a plan to have students take big risks and to innovate and to grow partnerships, while meeting regularly with undergraduates government
 - Create a vibrant social environment that needs to be intellectual and stimulating
 - He still has a PhD to finish along with his start up business besides being the GSG President
- Senators have been good about reading minutes and communicating information about needing corrections
- Thanks to the committee members for doing the work and for the chairs that stepped up
- He announced his intention to resign at the end of the December meeting which will call for a re-election of a new president
 - Everything planned for this semester will be seen through
- Advice for the next president:
 - Talk to your advisor to make sure you have their full support
 - The last election was close and built personal connections with many members and committees from empowering people and by placing higher expectations on them
- Stephanie Luff followed President Razzook and addressed the GSG regarding the recent branding campaign
 - Two color schemes and send any other suggestions to Stephanie Luff who is very open to any suggestions
 - Anyone can vote on this since it is on the open floor and not on the senate floor
 - Branding design for logos and branding GSG events along with other advertisements
 - Working on a logo especially since events are becoming so widely known and they need to be as professional as possible

- It was recommended to the group to postpone an official vote since there is plenty of room for improvement
 - A poll should be made to see what members want
 - Will be using different colors than the University and the GSG won't be as strict and can have a few exemptions
 - Logos and colors are in the emails
 - For option A: 19 votes
 - For option B: 16 votes
 - Will people know if we are associated with UD since its orange not yellow and will they know who the GSG is?
 - It was suggested that it would be a good thing to have one color different than the university
 - Like option A but with orange: 13 votes
- GSG Logos:
 - Traditional logo: 26 votes
 - Modern logo: 6 votes
 - Will move towards a traditional style but is open for suggestions
- Senator Bonistall made a suggestion to have background information provided to members that can't vote on the Senate Floor so all members are aware of the amendments and can provide a healthy discussion. This will also prevent the Senate floor from being yielded to non-senators.

Elections Committee Amendment

- It is important to start committee sooner than January
 - Last year was the first time of having online elections and the GSG learned a lot
- Important to have elections committee draft rules to be voted on by senators
- Some people were not happy with the decisions the elections committee made
- Change the word in the first part from "in" instead of "by" in order to get committee formed earlier
- Second part rules need to be approved by senators by the January meeting
 - This allows people who are considering elections to know what the rules are when they start campaigning
- Have to be "active" standing member to vote in election and senators need to make sure to work with their proxy to have representation in the January meeting
- If you don't meet criteria than you can't vote
 - Regarding last year and how it was that handled, all the voting was determined by the membership officer who tracks attendance of the meetings, either general or committee meetings
- Election committee has a list of active senators who will be sent the link to vote
- One debate was on having January meeting when members won't be around
 - Is it a good idea to have it then?
 - If we don't have quorum, we can't have a vote so we need everyone to do their best to attend
- Governance committee is in agreement if the amendment is passed
 - The elections committee should be elected tonight and should take nominations from anyone especially on the open floor
 - Need exactly 3 members to sit on the committee

- Can begin to administer election rules in January and then can finish out in the Spring
- Vote will be on the open floor regarding elections committee members
 - Don't need any experience and it is a commitment and very important
 - Typically there is a chair and there are two people that support that person
- Elect three tonight and then they can figure out who is the chair later on
 - Alicia passed all the information to Emily and she would be happy to sit down and explain the process
 - If you plan on running for elections than you can't be on the committee
- Responsibilities include coming up and determining election rules, administering elections etc.
 - Contact IT about glitches, determine active member standards, and determine rules for special circumstances such as someone who drops out or two candidates that tie
- Nominations:
 - Nick Powers
 - Hetty Nie
 - Sandra Diaz
 - Rachel Zimemrman
 - Loue Ye

Exrernal Committees

- Address issue of nominating people to faculty senate committee
 - Some need to be done by May and some happen whenever
 - Take nominations in writing prior to May meeting to be approved and if not approved there will be a vote
 - Any vacancies will be filled by the president
- One problem is that new senators won't be apart of the process
 - Most of long term planning happens over the summer and it's too hard to get everything done the first week of the fall semester
- Make it more clear to senators in the spring about the may meeting

Officer Voting Amendment

- All members of executive council can vote in the general elections
 - In the previous years, officers couldn't vote in elections
 - 2 things that came up last year that requested officers having the ability to vote
 - Officers have more information that others might not and are more educated to some degree
 - Logistically if there was 5 more votes, that will help to break ties
 - Just the parliamentarian won't be allowed to vote

Special Elections

- Governance committee was concerned about quickly putting together elections rules for a special election
- Chair needs to be elected first in order to have someone accept submitted nominations

- Tried to keep rules consistent from last year to keep the election as smooth as possible
- Alex will stay as long as he wants to talk about the presidency and the roles the presidency requires
 - Get approval of advisor
 - Motivate people and inspire people to perform above and beyond
 - Public face of the GSG and represent everyone not just yourself in order to get things done
 - In charge of planning the meetings
 - Logistical planning of GSG events
 - Executive Meetings
 - Collaborating with VP and helping set up meetings
 - Outside committees attendance
 - Everyone's #2

IX. SENATE FLOOR

Old Business

- Motion to approve October meeting minutes passed

New Business

- Motion: To suspend Article VI, Section 2, Clause (b) of the By-laws, waiving the requisite one week's notice so that By-law amendments may be considered at tonight's meeting.
 - Senator Zimmerman moved and Senator Castillo seconded
 - No further discussion
 - The motion passed

By-Laws Amendment: Elections and Committee & Procedures

- Amend the By-Laws, Article IV, Section 2, Item (c): Strike "in" and replace with "by" and amend the By-laws, Article IV, Section 1, Item (a) by adding Sub-item 1: The elections rules must be approved by the Senate by the end of the January meeting.
 - Senator Bonistall moved and Senator Powers seconded
 - No further discussion and a 2/3rds vote is needed
 - Amendment passed

By-Laws Amendment: Appointments to external Committees

- Amendment to the By-laws, Article III, Insert Section 4: External Committees, which reads:
 - (a) Nominations, including self-nominations, to serve on Faculty Senate standing committees for the subsequent academic year must be received in writing by the President two weeks prior to the May meeting. Nominees shall be vetted by outgoing and incoming Executive Committees, which shall then present a slate to the Senate for

- approval in full on Senate Floor at the May meeting. No nominee may serve on more than one Faculty Senate standing committee. If the slate is not approved, then the floor shall be opened for elections among the original pool of nominees and each position shall be elected individually. Any positions that remain unfilled by the end of May meeting shall default to the President until another election can be held at the September meeting.
- (b) Appointments to fill any vacancies, or any other external committee appointments, standing or ad hoc, shall be made by the President. All interested students are encouraged to discuss their interest in serving on an external committee with the President.
 - Senator Bonistall moved and Senator Jones seconded
 - No further discussion and a 2/3rds vote is needed
 - Amendment passed
 - A vote was also taken at this time regarding the elections committee
 - Nick Powers received 23 votes
 - Hetty Nie received 15 votes
 - Sandra Diaz received 15 votes
 - Rachael Zimmerman received 10 votes
 - Loue Ye received 3 votes

By-Laws Amendment: Voting in Officer Elections

- Amendment to the By-Laws, Article IV, Section 2. Insert as Item (c) and re-label subsequent items: Each member of the Executive Council and all Senators who are active in standing at the time polls open shall vote in officer elections. And amend by the By-Laws, Article II, Section 3, Item (c) 3. Strike the word “elect” and replace with “vote for”.
 - Senator Bonistall moved and Senator Luff seconded
 - No further discussion and a 2/3rds vote is needed
 - Amendment passed

Additional Motion to approve elections committee chair to send out emails to all senators regarding specific procedures

- Senator Bonistall moved and Senator Hughey seconded
- The motion passed

Senator Brodie moved to close the Senate Floor and Senator Wallace seconded

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Sign cards for Isaac
- ELI Community Garden event Saturday from 9am to 1pm
- International Education Week is this upcoming week and there are a lot of events planned www.udel.edu/EU
- Newark residents are having a Mayoral election for residents only
- New Director of ISE Lab is having a discussion on biology historical perspective of species, evolution, and diversity
 - Deer Park Tavern at 6pm Tuesday

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Gildemeyer
Graduate Student Government Secretary