

UD Graduate Student Government
Public Meeting Minutes
October 9, 2014 | 123 Memorial Hall | 5:30 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

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

II. GUEST SPEAKERS: DEBRA HESS NORRIS AND NANCY BRICKHOUSE, *DELAWARE WILL SHINE* (STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVE)

There are three strands to the strategic plan. Nancy Brickhouse provided an overview and then asked for responses about what graduate students need. Topics brought up were the graduate orientation, whether graduate students feel that they are part of the university's traditions, the isolated nature of departments, and the length of funding. We also discussed how the strategic plan would encourage fair working conditions within academia (by cutting back on adjunct labor, etc.). Debra Hess Norris asked whether we see ourselves identifying with the grand challenges laid out in draft form by the committee. Some students within the arts and humanities suggested that these challenges seemed science-based. Finally we discussed the American research university. Graduate students addressed caps on class size, cross-listing graduate with undergraduate courses, problems with traditional course formats, distance learning, how courses are distributed within the graduate career, and taking courses in other disciplines. Dr. Norris asked how concerned students were about public engagement. Members expressed desire for greater teacher training.

III.A. INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Social Committee – Katie Bonanno (kbonanno@udel.edu) and Vishnu Vardhan Chittamuru (vishnuv@udel.edu)

- Bimonthly Meet & Greets will be held at the Speakeasy this year.
 - September's "Get to Know the GSG" Meet & Greet was successful with over 100 students in attendance.
 - The next Meet & Greet will be Friday, November 14 at 7 p.m. It will be Food Drive themed.
- Save the Date! Wednesday, December 3 (4:30-9:30 p.m.) is UD Night at Yuletide at Winterthur.
 - \$10 for students, faculty, and staff.
 - We are hoping to include alumni by working with the Alumni Office, TBD.
 - Depending on interest, we may arrange a bus shuttle to Winterthur. Otherwise, we will help facilitate carpools.
- We are currently planning smaller weekly or biweekly events at the Speakeasy.
 - Ideas: Trivia/game nights, Fireside Chat with the Provost, spring lawn games.

Events Committee – Andrea Drewes (adrewes@udel.edu)

- Graduate Student Gala
 - Friday, October 10 in Old College Hall – University Museums
 - Final details were discussed, but predominantly this event was planned by the Executive Committee over the summer months
 - Volunteers are needed for the night of the event
 - Cost of \$10 per person; includes heavy hors d'oeuvres, one alcoholic beverage ticket, one non-alcoholic beverage ticket. Additional beverages will be available for purchase
- Graduate Research Forum
 - Tuesday, April 21, 2015 at Clayton Hall
 - One keynote speaker this year will be Ralph D. Cope, PhD, President of Accudyne Systems. He is a former UD Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering and the Cofounder of UD Orthopedic and Biomechanics Engineering Center (now the Center for Biomechanical Engineering Research).
 - The theme has been chosen and sent to Grad Office for approval: Bridging the Gap: Communicating Academic Research Beyond the Campus
 - Save-the-dates are being printed and will be available at the Gala
 - Ideas for a Journal of Delaware Graduate Research were discussed as way for UD grad students to publish their work present at the Forum. Continued discussion on this topic will occur between GSG president and Dr. Martin about feasibility of this idea
- Nomination and Selection of Committee Chair: Andrea Drewes will serve as the Events Committee Chair for 2014-15 academic year.

Communications Committee – Stephanie Luff (sluff@udel.edu)

- The style guide will be made available on the GSG Website. This will include a PowerPoint template.
- Further work was done on the GSG t-shirt and size orders were taken. If you have not ordered a t-shirt yet and would like one, please contact Stephanie.
- Save-the-dates for the Graduate Research Forum have been completed and printed. Senators will receive bundles for distribution soon.
- The committee created advertising for the Gala

III.B. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Diversity Committee – Holly Walker (hollylyn@udel.edu)

- The committee discussed the Ally training that some of the GSG members attended and the eventual creation of an LGBT Ad hoc GSO for this year.
- Potential future topics for the Diversity Committee Brown Bag Lunch Series were discussed and we set the topics for the remainder of the academic year.

- Our next Brown Bag Lunch Series will take place on Oct. 13, from 12-1pm in Rm 309 of the ISE laboratory building. Check out the flyer at: <http://www.udel.edu/udaily/2015/oct/graduate-series-100814.html>
- The committee discussed potential ideas and way to advertise for our "Rep Your Culture" event taking place in February.
- Looking into other programming events that the diversity committee wants to participate in or sponsor over the course of the academic year. One possibility is a sponsored sports night.

Student Life – Meg Hutchins (mhutch@udel.edu) and Xunyi Xie (xunyix@udel.edu)

- At the first Student Life Committee meeting on September 15, we discussed the committee's purpose, focus, and logistics.
- Housing: we discussed the possibility of setting up a message board/listserv for grad students or tapping into UD Classifieds to post about open rooms or solicit roommates. It seems like there are a bunch of individuals/groups/departments that all end up doing the same work collecting resources, so it would be much more efficient if we can centralize things a bit. The snag last year when we tried to get a list of local apartment complexes posted online was that legally the University did not want to appear to be showing favoritism. Updates from Dr. Martin will follow.
- Health Care: we discussed the implications of the Affordable Care Act, which states that an employer must provide full health benefits for employees working 30 hours or more per week. Since most contracted grad students work 20 hours (as per their contracts), the group did not think this was really an issue. The GSG has been trying to set up a date where a representative from Blue Cross Blue Shield can speak to grad students about what the new health plan covers and how to make the best use of it.
- Meg Hutchins and Xunyi Xie were elected co-chairs.

Sustainability – Nick Kaufman (nkaufman@udel.edu) and Kelsea Schumacher (kschum@udel.edu)

- It was decided that the Sustainability committee would be co-chaired by a triumvirate, with senator Nick Kaufman serving for the academic year, senator Kelsea Schumacher during the Fall Semester, and senator Frances Bothfeld in the Spring Semester.
- The committee discussed engaging in issues such as increasing the number of water-bottle refill stations on campus, initiating an "e-waste" and battery recycle program.
- Additionally, given the positive response that last year's changes to the Dumpster Detour project received, the committee is interested in expanding the project to work in collaboration with other groups.

III.C. SENATE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Elections Committee – Amanda Hughey (hughey@udel.edu)

- The elections committee has been elected and will have their first meeting in October.

Governance Committee – Isaac Harris (iharris@udel.edu)

- The first discussion point was the possibility of having the May meeting's minutes voted on electronically by the outgoing Senators rather than waiting for the September meeting. It was

noted that waiting so long to approve the minutes requires new Senators to approve a document that they may not have firsthand knowledge of. It was also noted that waiting until September requires the Senate to start a new year with old business, which is not done in some governing bodies. There was a concern that this new system may lead to some not actually voting to approve the minutes. It was suggested that there was a reminder that even though the last GSG meeting of the academic year has passed that approving the minutes are a part of their duty. No legislation was proposed.

- The second topic that was discussed was the fact that we get UD alerts about crime in or around campus but we do not get alerts for campus closings. This topic was brought to Senator Nick Kaufman. It was mentioned that this question was brought up at a GSG meeting last year to a representative of public safety. Last year the representative said that this would add a burden to the system. It was suggested that we open a dialogue with the head of public safety in the hopes that they would be willing to institute campus closings into the alert system. No legislation was proposed as of yet but Isaac Harris said that he would discuss the possibility of starting such dialogue with Chris Castillo.
- The committee is still awaiting information about an informally mentioned ad hoc committee.

III.D. EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no questions on external committee reports.

Faculty Senate – Chris Castillo (Castillo@udel.edu) and Cesar Caro (ccaro@udel.edu)

- There were four presentations made to the Faculty Senate, from President Harker, from Deputy Provost for Research and Scholarship Charlie Riordan, from Vice President for Enrollment Management Chris Lucier, and from Vice Provost for Diversity Carol Henderson. Harker and Riordan discussed the position of the University as it moves forward on the Delaware Will Shine strategic plan. Riordan emphasized the Thought Leader Speaker Series, especially undergraduate and graduate student involvement in planning a talk in the series this spring term. Lucier talked at length and in detail about the unanticipated large size of this year's freshman class, and explained how expectations from the three-year trend in declining yield rate coupled with a last-minute boom in offer acceptance coupled to give a larger than anticipated freshman class. This was explained to be partially due to the success of Admissions in sending out materials to students early and winning their interest over regional competitors. Henderson spoke with great specificity and frankness on the many obstacles to be overcome in meeting our diversity and inclusion goals, chief of which is the need for a more comprehensive support system to make all students feel welcome and included. Greater involvement from the faculty and all members of the university community, but faculty in particular, would help to create more awareness of the need for diversity and to help underrepresented students feel more comfortable and supported.
- There was also a resolution under new business authored by Professor Michael Chajes and co-sponsored by 10 senators, proposing a commission to be formed by the Faculty Senate to work with the relevant offices on campus to draft policies regarding sexual misconduct. This sparked much discussion about perceptions of rape statistics on campus, and whether what's being reported is accurate or reflective of current climate. It was pointed

out that there tends to be a conflation between student-student conflict versus faculty-student conflict, and in fact the Faculty Senate Student Life committee reviewed changes to the policies of the Office of Student Conduct regarding procedures in sexual assault cases, which after being passed by committee was then passed by the Faculty Senate on the consent agenda. The overall discussion seemed in support of the motion, but it cannot be voted upon until the November 3rd meeting.

- There was also a motion by Cecil Dybowski for the Executive Committee to look into 10 M16 assault rifles given to the UD Police force, as there were concerns about "weapons of war" potentially escalating armed conflicts unnecessarily. It was pointed out that these are kept under lock in key in the trunk of the patrol cars, but concerns were raised about the easy access within one's vehicle as compared to a central repository from which one must check out a weapon in case of an on-campus emergency. Executive Committee will look into this issue.
- More information is available at <http://www.udel.edu/udaily/2015/oct/faculty-100814.html>.

Faculty Senate Student Life Subcommittee – Akisha Jones (jakisha@udel.edu)

- Campus Safety (Crime Alerts): There was heavy conversation over the recent crimes on campus. Both GSG and SGA spoke on behalf of students and expressed our increased concerns over campus safety. Comparisons were also made between our campus and others where the use of technology has created a more safe campus environment. It was also mentioned that there was limited bus service as night which is considered to some becoming a safety concern. They will have the Chief of Police come to speak at the next faculty senate meeting to address questions and provide information.
- Sexual Harassment Case: There was conversation about how the case was handled but more about clarifications over how the case should've been handled as well as the lack of transparency and information provided to the public. Faculty Senate will have the Title IX office (Sue Groff) come and present at an upcoming faculty senate meeting.
- Purnell Hall: There was a brief conversation over construction issues, fire/safety concerns at Purnell Hall. It was suggested that public safety conduct a fire drill and assess the matter.

General Education Committee – Hadi Al-Khateeb (khateeb@udel.edu), with notes from Cesar Caro (ccaro@udel.edu)

- The University is undergoing a process of reviewing and revitalizing its General Education curriculum, which is the set of standards and requirements to be met by all UD undergraduates in order to make them well-rounded and well-prepared graduates. General Education includes such things as the distribution requirements, First Year Experience (FYE), etc. The open hearing was specifically to gain feedback from the Faculty Senate on a draft created by the General Education task force (faculty working on this issue, related to but separate from the Faculty Senate standing committee on General Education). The draft was primarily composed of two sections -- a statement of purpose and mission (a vision), and a set of learning objectives (measurable goals for graduates to fulfill).
- The main content of the discussion was about three things: an emphasis on "computational" reasoning, "effective communication through written, oral, and aesthetic expression," and on students being "capable" or "aware" of and "able" to think in a broader cultural context. The discussion on "computational" was about what the word means, how requirements for computational thinking would be implemented and how this differs from other types of reasoning, e.g. qualitative or quantitative or artistic. The discussion on "aesthetic" was on whether this includes such things as data visualization, musical

expression, and whether it was better expressed as "creative" or "artistic," since it was explained that it was intended to encapsulate a need for the arts. A concern was that requirements could be met towards aesthetic expression, while not being very creative or artistic, and another was that the word seems to be at odds with "effective," since art can be effective though not necessarily aesthetic. And there was a discussion about "aware" being a very passive word, with a suggestion of striking it in favor or just "able," with a counterbalancing view that self-awareness is a critical part of liberal arts education, if not specifically reflected in the draft brought forth.

- Podcast link: <http://udcapture.udel.edu/podcast/watch.php?c=567>

III.E. ORGANIZATIONAL DELEGATE REPORTS

Women in Engineering – Anagha Kulkarni (anagha@udel.edu)

- a. Meeting will be Friday, October 10 at 3:30 in ISE lab atrium.

Black Graduate Student Association – Asia Downtin (adowntin@udel.edu)

- a. Saturday, October 18 from 8:30-12:30 the BGSA will be cleaning up living quarters at the Sunday Breakfast Mission in Wilmington
- b. Thursday, November 6 from 5:30-7:30 is the annual Sharing Secrets for Success panel, led by current graduate students to offer advice to potential applicants to graduate school
- c. Weekly quiet writing sessions are every Wednesday from 4-7 in 416 Ewing Hall

IV. OPEN FLOOR

- a. VP Hughey discussed the aims and methods of advocacy in GSG. Step one is attending meetings and naming a proxy. Step two is voting on legislation and for officers. Voting is not an option, but a responsibility. Step three is communicating what happens in meetings to your constituents. Step four is soliciting feedback from constituents. Step five is participating in a committee.
- b. Unrepresented programs. VP Hughey announced that there are still 14 unrepresented programs. We would like to appoint acting senators until we have our next round of elections. Appointment would only occur if only one person in the department expressed interest; if multiple people expressed interest, then the program would have to wait until elections occurred.
- c. LGBTQ Ad Hoc Committee. Senator Hutchins explained how the idea for this committee came about. Akisha Jones asked how this is different from the diversity committee. Senator Hutchins explained that this would give support to grad students who currently don't feel fully supported by the university. Cesar Caro supported the idea behind this, but argued that grad students are supported in LGBTQ Caucus. Senator Hutchins responded that the idea behind this an organization wholly focused on the graduate student body. A proxy asked about the naming choice; the group is open to including other letters to increase inclusiveness. President Castillo explained the logic behind starting the organization off within the GSG, in order to give them the resources to eventually become self-sustaining. There was discussion about whether this is about funding; Senator Hutchins and President Castillo explained that this is more about connections and other types of resources (such as Speakeasy space). Akisha Jones expressed concern about the model of GSG as an incubator. VP Brodie argued that this is a positive precedent to set, as many GSOs quickly fail. Therein followed a good deal of discussion about whether or not this was the best method to support this group.

- d. Senator Pozzi brought up the possibility of a bike path from South to North campus. Cesar added that the sustainability committee has discussed this in the past. He also added that the Newark Bike Project is starting a bike share program.
- e. Akisha Jones brought up the issue of how expensive nutritious food is on campus. President Castillo suggested that the Student Life Committee might take this up.
- f. A Senator brought up the issue of parking near the library. VP Brodie said that you can call Parking Services, and they can add off-hour access to particular closed lots.

V. SENATE FLOOR

Parliamentarian Harris opened the Senate Floor at 7:17 pm.

- a. Old Business
 - It was moved and seconded to approve the Minutes from September 11. There was no discussion and the Minutes were approved.
- b. New Business
 - LGBTQ Ad Hoc Committee. Senator Drewes motioned to change “exclusively” to “explicitly.” The motion passed. The motion to approve the committee passed.

There was no legislation from the floor, and Senate Floor closed at 6:44 pm.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Graduate Student Gala is Friday, October 10 in Old College Hall. There will be two entrance times: 5:30-7:00 and 7:30-9:00.
- b. Campus Safety Walk is October 16 at 6:30 pm. Let Chris Castillo (castillo@udel.edu) know if you or one of your constituents would like to participate.
- c. There will be a graduate student Halloween meeting, sponsored by OGPE at The Speakeasy.
- d. Our November meeting will be held at Townsend Hall.
- e. Health Insurance Information Session, originally planned for October 23 at 5:30 pm, will instead be part of our November meeting
- f. Health Promotion is hosting a Stress Less Fest on the North Green from noon to 2:00 on Thursday, October 16
- g. Physical Therapy is organizing a Family Fun Day on Sunday October 19 from 1:00-5:00 in front of the STAR building
- h. The Parking and Transportation committee will be meeting to talk about transportation issues, and particularly bus-related issues, at the end of the month. Please email any feedback on busses and transportation to Joe Brodie (jbrodie@udel.edu)

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:30

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Wessel
Graduate Student Government Secretary