

UD Graduate Student Government
March Public Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2016 | 103 Gore Hall | 5:30 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm.

II. GUEST SPEAKER

Rick Deadwyler, UD's Director of Government Relations came to speak on issues impacting the University. His job is to represent the university, and its faculty, students, and alumni, in the state's capitol. Right now, budget is very important. The state has had fiscal issues, the revenues are weak and unstable and the revenue landscape is changing. Higher education is #4 in the top five state expenditures, after public education, healthcare, and corrections/prisons. Higher education is also the most likely to receive less money from the state, it is a vulnerable expenditure. There were multiple pieces of legislation last year which impacted the university last year including House Bills 6, 42, 1, and Senate Concurrent Resolution 39. House Bill 1 is especially important as it establishes legislation regarding sexual assault and directly impacts UD as far as requirements to report to law enforcement, data disclosure and monitoring by DOJ, training of staff, and the understanding of mandatory reporting. It is important that UD be able to discern who needs more training in this area specifically.

Government Relations has recently: (1) launched a Legislative Monitoring Program to share incoming legislation with subject-matter expert reviewers and identify and respond to impactful legislation; (2) executed a communication and outreach strategy via biweekly updates to legislature and community leaders, a government relations website, and developed a third party voice (social media, illustration, etc.); (3) built and strengthened existing relations with policy makers; (4) included work study student staffing and consulting support in Dover. These are all important ways to emphasize to senators how many university connections reside within their districts.

Since January 2015, the Legislative Monitoring Program has reviewed over 400 pieces of legislation filed in the 148th general assembly, raised awareness across the university and has positioned the university to be well positioned for proactive/early responses to legislation.

Government Relations is currently focused on expanding their 3rd party voice through grassroots communications and outreach in an attempt to try to get the message out to the legislators and community leaders with help from alumni, students, BOT, and business leaders. You can sign up to be a UD Champion at www.governmentrelations.udel.edu.

Regarding recent legislation on diversity dollars, Government Relations is also a member of the UD Executive Council for Diversity, with interactions with Delaware Civil Rights Organization. They are leading efforts to develop and respond to State Diversity Mandate (Epilogue Section 290 – Diversity Assessment), engaged in campus-wide student racial challenges and opportunities participation in RSO programs and small group student sessions, strategic communications and

outreach to state officials and community leaders regarding diversity – utilizing multiple channels and social media.

Lastly, Government Relations hopes to leverage what is happening on campus to get legislators coming here to UD to interact with students and really understand our stories. UD Day is scheduled for April this year, so legislators can really hear from students. They also have channels that can support students with interests.

Member Caro – Question regarding 3rd party voice – with such a diversity of opinions, what will people rally around? Operationally, how do you imagine this going forward, student vs faculty impact, etc.? A: Using House bill 1 as an example, different pieces of the legislation are impactful to different people – important to be able to package those different issues and get it to the right audience. Additionally, the website is very detailed and can direct visitors to the right legislators.

Pres. Brodie – Question regarding international students – what kind of power do they have over some of the decisions if they don't have a vote but they have a vested interest? A: Sharing your voice because you are here is important. You can go to Dover register to testify, or email as a group, or become part of an advocacy effort to meet with a bill sponsor or district representative as members of this community for however many years for the course of the degree.

III.A. INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Communications Committee – Erin Corcoran

- Please email Tianhang or Joe or Erin if you are interested in assisting with the White Paper.

Events Committee – Yiben Wang

- 117 abstracts for the forum. Will be grouping 48 oral presentations into 9 groups.

Social Committee – Ty Nie

- Grad student night at the REP is sold out.

III.B. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Diversity Committee – Vinnie Liu

- Meeting with writer from UDaily, very important to increase GSG visibility and understanding of what graduate students represent and do.
- There are varying levels of offense to certain words for disabled. Additionally, there is no registration for disability on campus. Difficult to contact/quantify.

Student Life Committee – Sophie Guderian & Eddie Marks

- See committee report.
- Bike project may also partner with ELI. DelDOT will be doing a guided ride afterward.

Sustainability Committee – Richard Bowers & Stijn Koshari

- See committee report.

III.C. SENATE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Governance Committee – Matthew Rinkevich (mrink@udel.edu)

- Feel free to go to governance committee or to Matt for assistance with projects you might be working on. It is their job to help and they are happy to. They also hope they can help to begin any work in advance of next year.

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

- No updates at this time.

III.D. EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

See committee reports.

III.E. ORGANIZATIONAL DELEGATE REPORTS

No update at this time.

IV. OPEN FLOOR

A. Officer Elections

- Committee prepared the form for vote after next week's Special Elections Meeting. It will include each Officer Candidates 5-minute speech. In order to vote for officers, you **MUST** be at the meeting next week. Please come prepared with some good questions.
- Senator elections are also coming up right after that. Let your constituents prepare to nominate a senator for next year!

B. Vacation time in graduate contracts.

- Vacation and sick time is **NOT** in graduate contracts. Is this impacting anyone one you?
 - VP Kim – going home is expensive and you can't go home over national holidays, and advisors take it for granted that international students work these times and do not get much time leave for international travel. It would be good if international students could have the ability to block days.
 - VP Luff – even as a domestic student, you still feel the pressure to work on a holiday because you don't really "get the day off". The perception is its expected and if it were in the contract, graduate students might not feel so guilty.

- Dr. Martin – if the university is closed, there is no expectation for graduate students to be here. There should be a conversation between you and your advisor to clarify.
 - Chair Bowers – some students are being “mandated” to be at their office 9-5. That’s 40 hours, and they must be held to the 20 hours in the contract. Graduate students are vulnerable to be removed from funding or have a lower standing in the lab if they don’t meet this ‘requirement’.
 - a. Dr. Martin suggests that they clarify that that 20 hours is to meet your contract as graduate students to make a living and additional hours should be spent toward your research and completing your degree. It needs to be clear what the ratio of work to thesis completion is. It would be great to have students come speak and share.
 - Member Caro – generally, a need to clarify expectation in general. This has come up in multiple forms in his time here. It’s possible there is not a coherent message if this issue is coming up repeatedly. It might be necessary to create some sort of handbook on those policies. Be clear what the policy issue is, don’t just ask, “do you have issues with vacation?”
 - Member El-Zaatari- students do not want to be limited by their advisors, they want to control the timing and amount of time during which they can take a vacation.
 - a. Dr. Martin - Faculty must request time off and must say what it is for, this must be approved. You also cannot carry over time off with the UD HR system. A better strategy is to come up with a proposal to approve through the senate that students in these sort of appointments should have these options for vacation.
 - Pres. Brodie – Please contact to assist with this going forward!
 - Dr. Martin – Please direct students to her with this issue! It will be very helpful to have a base policy to present to the faculty.
- C. Constituents complaining about course being made impossible to pass, want to find out if something can be done about who is teaching the course.
- Dr. Martin suggests that for this, you must go through the appropriate channels. Also, Dr. Kinservick can help with faculty issues if the department channels do not work. See Dr. Martin if the department channel path is not working.

V. SENATE FLOOR

Parliamentarian Rinkevich opened the Senate Floor at 6:56 p.m.

A. Old Business

- It was moved and seconded to approve the Minutes from February 11st, 2016. There was no discussion and the Minutes were approved.

B. New Business

- There was no legislation from the floor. Motion to close senate floor carries.

Senate Floor closed at 6:57 pm.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. For all upcoming committee meeting times and locations, please see <http://sites.udel.edu/gsg/>
- B. March Meet & Greet – Grad Student Night at the REP, Friday March 18th at 8:30pm, featuring To Kill a Mockingbird
- C. Next trivia night will be on Wednesday, March 23rd at 7pm in the Speakeasy
- D. The BMES, in conjunction with other local educational representatives has put out a call for submissions to the first annual Art in Science Symposium. Select images will be displayed in the ISE Lab from April 4 to April 16, followed by a symposium on Saturday, April 16. Winning images already selected, 10 mini lectures for winning images. And top 3 winner. See the website for more information: <http://sites.udel.edu/art-in-science>
- E. Senator's reception with the President will be held April 18, 2016. Time TBA.
- F. Water is Life Kenya is hosting a Water Walk on April 23rd. For more information see <https://waterislifekenya.com/>
- G. The University Library is hosting a series of RefWorks and graduate student workshops for Spring 2016. You can get more information and sign up on their website, <http://library.udel.edu/>
- H. Next month, on the same day as the GSG meeting, ribbon cutting ceremony will be held at the library at 4:30 pm to officially open the Graduate Student Research Room (125A). It will have food, so please, go there and eat then come here.
- I. Announcements from the floor.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Hudson
Graduate Student Government Secretary