

Minutes from GSA meeting Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Conducted via zoom and recorded:

Roll Call:

- Floss – here
- Miller – here
- Krest – here
- Simmeth – here
- Naples – here
- Livingston- here
- Carney – here
- Sisyukin – here
- Colligan – here
- Houseknecht – here

Approval of minutes from Nov 12<sup>th</sup> meeting:

- Motion – Naples
- Second – Carney

Vote to approve minutes:

- Yes: 10
- No: 0

Vote to approve agenda:

- Yes: 10
- No: 0

New Senators:

- Sara Reinhart – senator for the school of professions.
  - Vote to bring Sara on Yes: 10 No: 0. Vote is unanimous to bring Sara on

President Report:

- President Conway Turner is happy with the progress we have made so far. Would like us to reach out to all the schools deans and secretaries to pass along the message about the openings on the board. She is also happy the students are taking GSA merch.
- Tabling events for Nov.: Took place inside of the SAMC – about 70 students signed in and grabbed snacks/merch. Large portion of the population was undergrad so consider moving the times of events to engage with more graduates. Out of those 70 students we

received minimal social media following/interaction. Need to still consider how to get students more involved with our pages.

- Interview and skills event: Did not have a large turnout around 7 students joined in. Expressed wanting to do a resume writing event next semester. Need ideas to boost exposure for these events and the GSA in general.
- Prospective events: Funds have built up so thinking about things we can do with it, SWAG, etc. to balance the budget out. Looking to really pack the spring semester with events. Reaching out to professors who teach popular classes and topics and see if they would be interested in doing events. In touch with multiple community partners that have strong missions related to environmental protection. Having events around earth day to highlight the importance.
- GSA scholarship decision: Deadline for the scholarship is FEB – graduate advisory council needs the OK that we will provide 10 scholarships to PT and FT graduate students. Due to the surplus budget, we would be able to do a little more than we have in the past.
  - Senator Carney motions to change the amendment that we raise the number of students and the amount of the scholarship
  - Senator Livingston seconds senator Carney's motion
  - E. Vice President Simmeth want to up each scholarship 2-300 dollars
  - E. Vice President of Administration Naples is concerned that raising the scholarship amount could set future GSA boards up for expecting students.
  - Dr. Floss suggests we place a notice on the site and on the constitution that the raise in the scholarship amount is due to the abundance of funds this year and is subjected to change in future years.
  - Vote to raise the number of students to 6 part time graduate student and 6 full time graduate students as well as change the scholarship amount from 500 for PT to 700 for PT and from 1000 for FT to 1200 for FT – Yes: 10 No: 0 – vote was unanimous, and motion has been approved.
- President Krest will be sending out update emails about proposed amendments in the coming future.

#### Vice Presidents Report:

- Social media campaign: Instagram giveaway for students. Like, follow, and tag a friend to win a prize we have bought separately from the SWAG merch. Need to find out approximate amount for such merch so funds can be set aside.
- \$5000 will be spent for research fair, \$8000 on SWAG giveaways, leaves \$3000 dollars of wiggle room for nonacademic events.
  - Senator Carney created a spreadsheet to consider SWAG items, how many, and how much it would cost. Spreadsheet was geared toward the largest variety of items – try to make our money stretch.
  - Vice Pres. Simmeth motions for \$5000 dedicated to SWAG and giveaways
  - Senator Carney seconds
  - Vote – Yes: 10 No: 0 - unanimous

- Event planning committee: events for spring semester, figure out dates, times, and what we are doing. Meeting two or three times over break to figure out who will work each event. Complete committee members: Simmeth, Krest, Reinhart, Houseknecht.
- Research fair committee: plan for food, decorations. Ideally one senator from each school to be on this committee. Meeting one time over break and once in February to finalize everything. Complete committee members: Simmeth, Krest, Naples, Houseknecht, Reinhart, Colligan.
- Vice Pres. Simmeth will be sending out a google form to gain everyone's availability for the spring semester and to plan events better.

#### Vice President of Finance Report:

- Javier Mejia – Interested in the position. Background and program fit the position.
  - Vote – Yes: 10 No: 0 – unanimous to bring Javier on the Executive Board

#### Vice President of Administration Report:

- Professional development workshops/events: The highest requested topic for a professional development workshop was leadership skills. Surprisingly the least requested topic was creative problem-solving (CPS) and creativity. It is surprising because CPS and creativity are great tools to practice and gain leadership skills.
  - Secured a meeting with Dr. Puccio who is the chair of the creative studies department and would be thrilled to do a workshop on gaining leadership skills through CPS and creativity.
  - Second highest requested topic: work life balance – Reached out to the director of work life balance at UB- have not heard back yet will update when available.
  - One of the lower rated topics: public speaking, which can be an extremely important skill to learn for professional development. Reached out to an oral communication professor at Canisius – have not heard back yet will update when available.
- Student Welfare Committee: This committee is centered around the intellectual/academic, psychological, physical, social, and cultural well-being of graduate students.
  - Krest and Simmeth have joined the committee along with Naples to help plan events and reach out to graduate students regarding their welfare and wellbeing.
  - Request senators from each school contact their students and ask them about their welfare and how they are doing.
  - Would like to do events surrounding student welfare: Culturally relevant events surrounded by food, music, art. Doing stuff for the students who are homesick or feeling distress. Networking events for each school to connect students with other who are in their programs or in other programs they might not have interacted with otherwise.
  - Will be getting a survey together to send off hopefully before we get back from break. This will be when most students are checking their email again and I would

like to gain feedback about student welfare. What students may like to see from the GSA regarding their welfare and wellbeing.

- Will send out email regarding committee again to see if any of our senators are interested in joining.

#### Senator Report:

- Senator Colligan: Reaching out online population. Interested in gaining access to the demographic of online students to better understand our audience. What age, year, program are these students into better gauge our approach to reaching out to them. Possibly tapping into the public relation student's population for ideas to engage with these students.

#### Deans Report:

- Refugee population coming to campus from Afghanistan – need help with household items, clothing, kitchenware etc. Providing welcoming packages to them once they get here. What other types of events are happening around equality and inclusion so we can tap into this.
- Working with Kristen Fields to get people on campus for our speaker series. Focusing on those topics from the professional development questionnaire.
- Amherst chamber of commerce – opportunities for graduate students to participate in professional development. Share marketing ideas.
- Commencement is still being ironed out and will have updates when available.

Closing Comments: NONE

Motion to adjourn: Senator Carney

Second: Senator Colligan