

# Graduate Student Association Meeting

## Minutes

Friday, May 2, 2014

Bacon Hall 225

6:30 pm

<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Thomas Waters Siraj Bah Dinash Lal Dr. Kevin Railey Emmanuel Abreu Ashley Lanning Kaitlyn Marie Gardner Muhammed Sumbundu Maureen Vitali Stacy Creech	Andrea Gustafson Sharmin Jimenez John MacInnes Alexandria Donkor James Doran

**CALL TO ORDER:** President of GSA Thomas Waters called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** The Agenda was approved.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** The minutes from April 4, 2014 GSA meeting were all approved.

**REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT:** The outgoing President, Thomas Waters, said he was happy and proud of everything that was accomplished during this term, and thanked Senator Lanning for all her hard work on the planning of next week's Graduate Research Fair event. The GSA also received a thank you card from someone who was funded. (The card is read out loud).

The President also remarked that he, some other senators, and Dean Kevin Railey met with the interim President (Dr. Cohen) about the faculty evaluations. Some positive headway was made, and he is glad that both Senators Lanning and Gustafson (new E-board members) will be here next year to implement some action to centralize faculty evaluations.

**REMARKS FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE LIAISON:** Dean Kevin Railey congratulated the new E-board members in attendance, and expressed his satisfaction at having the GSA run as smoothly as it does. He pointed out some of the ways in which the GSA is effective and assists graduate students (e.g. via funding). Dean Railey also commended the exiting E-board and Senators on all their hard work and accomplishments, and hopes that the association continues steadily on its path of growth. In terms of business, there is an issue that needs to be resolved, since there is a tie (resulting from the recent election) for the

College Senate seat. His suggestion is that we break that tie tonight. The available options are either to run another election, or to submit it to a vote here tonight between the standing E-board members and Senators. Dean Railey motioned to use a paper ballot during this meeting to resolve the tie. Treasurer Lal seconded; the motioned passed unanimously.

(Stacy Creech, the newly elected GSA secretary for 2014-2015 was asked to step out of the room for five minutes, since the tie directly involved her)

(Senator Lanning reads the platforms of both candidates out loud)

(Voting occurs via paper ballots. Dr. Railey is tasked with counting the votes, and Stacy Creech is invited back in).

### **TREASURER REPORT:**

1. Recent Expenses:
  - US \$175.00 for the GSA pens
  - US \$600.00 Research Fair T-shirts
2. Review of recent approved funding requests:
  - 3 people applied for funding, and 2 were approved:
  - a. School of Arts & Humanities – Emmanuel Abreu
  - b. School of Education - Sydney Silver
  - c. School of Education - Phylicia Brown

Comments: Silver and Brown both applied to receive funding for the same program, but only Silver was able to demonstrate how it would serve her research.
3. Current GSA balance is US \$40,000.00
4. Treasurer Remarks: The outgoing Treasurer, Dinash Lal, would like to express his sincerest gratitude/delight at having been a member of the GSA's E-board this year, and would like to extend a special thank you to Dean Railey and Marnie, for their support and guidance.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Senator Abreu expressed some concern about what the complaint process is for when someone is denied funding. Treasurer Lal, responded that perhaps this wasn't really necessary, and that we need to empower the person who holds the position so that he/she can make decisions based on the documentation that is received. Dean Railey suggested that the Budget and Allocations Committee be used when necessary, to discuss/resolve any complaints we may receive. Their job is to review how money is allocated. President Thomas Waters expressed his full agreement with this suggestion. Senator Gardner raised the question of what is meant when students are asked to explain how their activity supports their scholarship, when requesting funds. Dean Railey answered that it includes a variety of things from conducting research to acquiring necessary instrumentation, etc. Senator Abreu motioned to have a procedure in place where, if a request is denied, then the Treasurer needs to forward the request to the Graduate Dean so he/she is made aware of the situation. Senator Kaitlyn Gardner seconded. Treasurer Lal was against the idea, because he believes we have a solid procedure in place. He said that this should/could be discussed in the future, but that no decisions should be made right now. Senator Abreu is uncomfortable with the position being able to deny applications without oversight. After some discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

### Public Relations/Marketing Committee reported by Senator Kaitlyn Gardner:

- Newsletter: Added an announcement for people to design/send in a logo for the GSA. Add contest guidelines.
- Frequency of issues: Once a semester, for now.

### Wellness Committee reported by Senator Ashley Lanning:

- Graduate Research Fair: 38 presenters.
  - T-shirts: Ordered 80, and got 100 drawstring bags to go with them. Cost: \$ US520.00
  - Pens, newsletters, bags, and T-shirts will be available to everyone upon registration.
  - Balloons: to decorate/to fill the space. We also got centerpieces to match. Cost: US \$290.00
  - Buffalo State Dining, managed by Chartwells, will provide the food. Cost: \$ US750.00
  - Total cost (including posters), approximately US \$3000.00
- Graduate Student Commons: We have our own space in the library, just above Argo Tea.

(At this time, after the committee reports were completed, President Waters asked Dean Railey for the outcome of the previous voting to break the tie, and it was officially stated that Stacy Creech had won and therefore would become a Senator).

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

- Graduate Student Scholarship: Will be put into effect next academic year. The applications will be submitted during the fall semester, and the decision will be made early during the spring semester.

## **CONSTITUENT QUESTIONS:**

Muhammed Sumbundu commented that the GSA has had more representation at the open forums for the search for President of the college than the undergraduate associations. 90% of attendance has been graduate students. Student input is crucial for this process. He urged us all at the meeting to try to attend the upcoming event(s) to meet with the candidates.

**ADJOURNMENT** at 7:44 p.m