

•GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (GSA)•
MEETING MINUTES
August 21, 2014•Ketchum Hall, Room 219

Welcome: **President Gustafson** called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

Remarks of the President: **President Gustafson** said that first and foremost on her mind is the procedure to handle the upcoming election to fill the Treasurer position. She asked if anybody had suggestions on how to handle it, since she doesn't want to be the only one making that decision.

Ensuing Discussion:

Interim Treasurer Abreu: "I think we should do it the same we've always done it, just in September instead of May. I would announce it, and put feelers out for candidates, then run it at the same time as the senator elections."

Senator Dinash Lal: "I would consider keeping an Interim until the next election."

Dean Kevin Railey (Administrative Liaison): "That is what we've done; we've kept an Interim until the next election."

Interim Treasurer Abreu: "Well, I can't be here during the spring anyway, because I won't be a matriculated student any longer."

Dean Kevin Railey: "I've spoken to Andrea about this, and I think it's really clear in the Constitution that the officers are elected, and you sort of put yourself in a category of being questioned if you appoint a Treasurer. The easiest and most convenient way to proceed, since we have an election coming up anyway, is to accept Treasurer nominations as well. You have time yourselves to encourage your classmates/peers to run for senator(s) and for Treasurer. I don't think the GSA would benefit from being questioned, so you want to be as clear and transparent as possible. Even if Manny (Interim Treasurer Abreu) was eligible, I'd still suggest he put his name forward and campaign. The odds are he would win, but it would be done in a democratic manner. So I strongly encourage that this be handled in the September elections."

Interim Treasurer Abreu: "I agree."

Senator Lal: "Me too."

Dean Kevin Railey: "Any dissenting opinions?"

Vice-President Lanning: "Manny is our Interim Treasurer because we had that situation with the elected one, and we needed to act quickly over the summer. I think the points that you're making are valid, and by adding this category to our upcoming election we would avoid people pointing fingers at us. It wouldn't be extra work for anybody."

Interim Treasurer Abreu: "We have to make every effort. If we open an election and nobody runs then it's a whole different ball game."

President Gustafson: "My only problem is how this is worded. I would worry about changing that, especially if we're setting this type of precedent. Our Constitution should address this better."

Interim Treasurer Abreu: "I don't think it contradicts the Constitution, but the document is a bit vague since it doesn't address resignations."

President Gustafson: "We should fix that. We are merely mimicking the impeachment protocol right now."

Dean Kevin Railey: "Does the Constitution say that officers will be elected in the spring?"

President Gustafson: "It does. Specifically."

Dean Kevin Railey: "There's nothing that tells us what to do in the Constitution, so we cannot contradict it. What is the spirit of the document? That these offices, especially, are elected. So giving it back to the student population is the right thing to do."

President Gustafson: "I'd like to see an official motion then, with the wording that since we have nothing specific in our Constitution to address abdications, we would like to rectify that in the coming year. We are making temporary decisions."

Dean Kevin Railey: "Well, we don't need a motion; we can just run the election."

Interim Treasurer Abreu: "The President is in charge of elections, and the Vice-President is in charge of senator elections. We can figure it out. Once the new senators come in, however, we do need to address resignations, and maybe put it under the same heading as impeachments."

President Gustafson: "I would like us to be very careful about adding things to the Constitution."

Dean Kevin Railey: "If making a motion would make you feel more at ease, then that is perfectly within your rights as a senator."

First Motion: **Interim Treasurer Abreu** motioned that we hold an election for a permanent Treasurer, with the senate elections. **Senator Lal** seconded.

Discussion:

President Gustafson: "Does anybody want to discuss it further?"

Interim Treasurer Abreu: "I do think this is the best possible way we can handle this, and we will not raise any eyebrows or have any issues."

(Voting for Motion #1 ensued. The motion passed unanimously).

Second Motion: **Dean Kevin Railey** (who can make motions but cannot vote) motioned to address resignations in the Constitution. **Interim Treasurer Abreu** seconded.

Discussion:

Dean Kevin Railey: "This way, officially, this has to be addressed during our first senate meeting. There should be something stated that makes this process easier for next time something like this occurs."

Interim Treasurer Abreu: "Getting it done and out of the way during our first meeting, on October 3rd, seems like the best idea."

President Gustafson: "Yes, we had discussed this with the E-board before, and this is what we thought was best."

Senator Lal: "Are you coming to that meeting with something already written?"

President Gustafson: "No, I would say we should discuss it then and there, and get everyone's (i.e. the new senators) input."

Interim Treasurer Abreu: "I think that there should also be more clarity on where the senators' terms end. We thought it was in May, but it carried out to the summer out of necessity this time around. We need to make that clear. We need definitive terms for both E-board members and senators."

Secretary Creech: "So you would like to add this to the motion? To be discussed at our next meeting?"

President Gustafson: "The motion needs to be restated."

Second Motion: (restated) **Dean Kevin Railey** motioned to charge the full senate with addressing the issue of resignation of E-board members, and the terms of senators, at the first meeting of the fall of 2014. **Interim Treasurer Abreu** seconded.

(Voting for Motion #2 ensued. The motion passed unanimously).

(Dean Kevin Railey asked to be excused due to a family situation, and departed at 6:19pm).

New Business:

President Gustafson said that our new website for the GSA is operational (gsa.buffalostate.edu). She is managing the website for the duration of her term as President, and she proceeded to show us each section and the information it features (e.g. senator election forms, upcoming graduate student night event at Cole's, our mission and vision, requesting funding). **Interim Treasurer Abreu** inquired as to the appropriateness of urging people who have requested funds to run for senate. **President Gustafson** thinks it's a good idea, and said that it is all of our jobs to try to encourage people to run and become involved. **President Gustafson** pointed out that she will have meetings with the new President (Katherine S. Conway-Turner) once a month, and that she would push to get our website on the main page of the school, since we all firmly believe that, as an association, we are as important as USG. **President Gustafson** also said that we should actively try to get the graduate student population to vote for the GSA fee. **Interim Treasurer Abreu** thinks that the fee will pass, because nobody is motivated to vote against it. We need to do a better job of announcing it, with flyers and whatnot. **President Gustafson** asked for suggestions on how to go about advertising this. After some discussion, it was decided that we should make posters and put them up on the graduate commons, and the different buildings graduate students frequent. **Secretary Creech** opined that word of mouth is

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important as well, and that we should spread the word in class. **Interim Treasurer Abreu** said we should also get the faculty involved so they can advertise it too. After some discussion, it was resolved that the different flyers and newsletters would be brought to and put on display in the different buildings as follows:

President Gustafson: Dean of Students Office (if allowed).

Vice-President Lanning: Classroom Building and Chase.

Interim Treasurer Abreu: Graduate Commons and the Graduate Office.

Secretary Creech – Ketchum and Bacon.

Senator Sharmin Jimenez: Science Building, Bulger, and cars in the parking lot (if allowed).

Senator Dinash Lal: Science and Mathematics Complex and Moot.

Interim Treasurer Abreu stated that we should encourage people to vote YES for the fee because of how much money we've given out (over US\$20,000.00) for funding, professional development, research, and scholarship. He also said that we could make the graduate commons (in the library) better by perhaps getting a printer up there. Everyone thought it was a great idea, and he will talk to the appropriate people in the library about it. **President Gustafson** brought up that we also need to advertise for the graduate student night event. **Secretary Creech** said she could talk to Jessica Sobczak and Marnie at the graduate school, about getting an email blast out. **Senator Jimenez** suggested that we use our social media as well to advertise. President Gustafson, Senator Jimenez, and Secretary Creech all offered to create flyers to advertise the event at Cole's (to be held on August 28th, from 5:30-9:30pm). **President Gustafson** also wanted to discuss whether or not our meetings are officially supposed to run according to Robert's Rules. She said that Secretary Creech sent her the minutes from a GSA meeting held on February 2013, where the Administrative Liaison proposed it should be so and everyone there agreed. President Gustafson believes that it should be stated within our by-laws that our meetings run by Robert's Rules, because it makes everything easier. During the first meeting we should definitely discuss our by-laws. Additionally, **President Gustafson** expressed that we need to start thinking about getting a faculty advisor. **Interim Treasurer Abreu** said that the people we nominate should meet certain criteria (i.e. college senate experience, involvement with a graduate program). After some discussion, we agreed that we would write a preliminary description of the process and duties for this position, and that, if agreed upon during the next meeting (October 3rd) we would then start contacting people to put their name(s) up for nomination.

It was agreed that these be the criteria/duties for the Faculty Advisor position:

- Graduate faculty who meets one (or more) of the following (preferred) qualifications:
 1. College Senate experience in the last 6 years.

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2. Graduate coordinator or chair(s) of their department (Current or in the past).
3. Willing to serve for the duration of the academic year.
4. Willing to attend senate meetings once a month.
5. Reasonable availability to offer guidance and advice when needed.

As a final point, business cards for E-board members were discussed, and the information to put on them was agreed upon (e.g. Name, position, official email, office number), as well as a quantity (i.e. 250 per person). It was agreed that **Vice-President Lanning** would be in charge of the completion of this task.

Treasurer Report:

(For the months of July and August)

Recent Awards:

- Anthony DiGesare (English M.A. program) was awarded funding to present at a conference in Barbados, hosted by the West Indian Literature Association.
 - Awarded amount: US\$800.00
- Julie A. Boerner (School of Natural Sciences) received funding for two events. One was fully funded, the other one only partially.
 - Awarded amount: US\$200.00

Recent requests:

- There are 2 pending requests at the moment, being reviewed. Both are from the School of Education.

Adjournment: at 8:07p.m.

Attendance:

Present:

*Andrea Gustafson - President
Ashley Lanning - Vice-President
Emmanuel Abreu - Interim Treasurer
Stacy Creech - Secretary
Sharmin Jimenez - Senator
Dinash Lal - Senator
Dean Kevin Railey - Administrative Liaison*

Excused:

Kaitlyn Gardner - Senator

Next Meeting: 3 October 2014.