

Graduate Student Association Meeting

Minutes

Friday, November 15, 2013

Bacon Hall 225

6:00 pm

Present	Absent
Thomas Waters Siraj Bah Andrea Gustafson Emmanuel Abreu Ashley Lanning Kaitlyn Marie Gardner Jimmy Doran Sharmin Jimenez Muhammed Sumbundu Paul Perez	Dinash Lal Alexandria Donkor Dr. Railey John MacInnes

CALL TO ORDER: President of GSA Thomas Waters called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA: The Agenda was approved.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: The minutes from Friday, October 18, 2013 GSA meeting were all approved.

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT:

President Thomas Waters: Welcome senators and everyone to the meeting. I apologize for not making it to the meeting on October 18, 2013. I also apologize on behalf of Dr. Railey and Dinash Lal (Treasurer) for their absences.

REMARKS FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE LIAISON: None

TREASURER REPORT:

1. Recent Expenses: No recent expenses.
2. Review of recent approved funding requests:
 - a. School of the Professions – No requests.
 - b. School of Natural & Social Sciences - \$100 (1 request) .
 - c. School of Education – No requests .
 - d. School of Arts & Humanities – \$ 350 (1 request).
3. Current GSA balance approximately, \$30,651.27 (as of 11/14/13).

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Wellness Committee: Reported by Senator Ashley Lanning

Financial Planning Event - Ashley contacted NYPIRG and one of Dinash Lal's contact at a finance agency. She e-mailed NYPIRG three times and hasn't got a replied back. Dinash Lal finance agency is willing to help us. They are willing to do one on one talk with student, do free credit report, workshops and etc. She wants to table at the union to let graduate students to know about this event and do a survey to ask them what kind of activities they want and include professors too. Emanuel has joined the group.

Feedback: Concern of how/when to reach graduate students. The Union seems the most central but students do not typically frequent the Union during their classes. A suggestion was made to meet students where their classes meet. Also, a suggestion was made to email students. Senator Lanning wants to ask students what they are actually looking for. Senator Abreu expressed concern that students don't respond well – given the results of the votes registered during the Senator election. President Waters reminded the group they the GSA is only in its second year and getting the word out about the GSA relies on the senators. He also reminded the group that all efforts need to be made to include online students.

Senator Gustafson recommended that next semesters the Senators go to core classes within their schools to let students know about the GSA and what it can do. She suggested that this semester was spent determining what the "pitch" about GSA should include so that all students are hearing the same information.

Senator Gustafson suggested the use of wufoo surveys to reach students. Senator Lanning suggested that paper surveys were made available to students to fill out in classes as well.

Ad hoc Committee: Reported by Senator Andrea Gustafson

Scholarship for Graduate Students:

Determination of funding available for awards:

- There should be two awards, per semester, per year, for a total of four awards.
- Each semester one part-time graduate student and one full-time graduate student will be chosen as a recipient of the scholarship.
- The full-time graduate will receive a scholarship of \$1000, and the part-time graduate will receive a scholarship of \$500.

Duration of the award:

- The scholarship will not be renewable, and is therefore a one-time award.

Establishment of scholarship criteria:

- The scholarship should be academic in nature, and should not be based on any other categorizing feature other than full-time/part-time status.
- Recipient must have a 3.5 GPA or higher within an accepted graduate program at Buffalo State. First year, first semester students will be ineligible for the scholarship due to the lack of a graduate level GPA.

- Applicant should assume responsibility in providing the scholarship committee with the reason why they deserve to be considered for the scholarship and how the awarding of said scholarship will contribute to their personal and professional development in their time here with Buffalo State. Applicant should also detail how the scholarship may allow them to give back to Buffalo State.
- Applicant will provide three recommendation letters, with a minimum of one letter pertaining specifically to their academic accomplishments. It is strongly suggested that applicants consider letters from faculty, administration, professional staff, and staff of Buffalo State. Letter should be written protecting student's anonymity.

Eligible applicants:

- Buffalo State graduate students only.
- Graduate students, regardless of their status or duration of enrollment will only be allowed to receive the scholarship once in their tenure.
- Cannot be a first year, first semester student.

Scholarship committee:

- A committee will be comprised of the GSA Treasurer and one Senator from each of the schools (Arts and Humanities, Natural and Social Sciences, Professions, and Education).
- The committee will receive the scholarship applications and select 4 for committee interview.
- The scholarship committee will interview each applicant with a predetermined set of questions; interview should not exceed 30 minutes. The predetermined set of questions should be agreed upon by the committee at their first meeting.
- You cannot be an applicant and submit on the committee

Questions to answer

- When and where will applications be available?
- Where should applications be sent, and how many copies are needed?
- When are applications due?
- How and when will the scholarship recipients be notified?
- How and when will the scholarships be dispersed?
- How should the scholarship be promoted through publicity?
- Would the funds conflict with other scholarship opportunities offered by the Graduate School?
- Please send information and updates to Senator Gustafson within a reasonable time to update documents and present at next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Still working on Graduate students getting their own floor in the library

NEW BUSINESS:

- GSA should do a big career fair networking to encourage the GSA as well as networking with students
- Graduate students in the College Senate:

- Thomas met with USG President and members of the College Senate. USG will create memo of understanding – 2 seats held for graduate students will now be elected through the GSA.
 - Election process needs to be established and Constitution needs to be amended. Voting needs to take place at same time USG.
 - Do we want to create an additional position for this person with the GSA Senate or do we want a GSA senator to serve on College Senate?
 - USG has to revise their by-laws.
 - Revise USG bylaws to say: “Any seats that are not filled needs to be filled by the GSA President”
 - Motion for **Senator Andrea Gustafson to chair committee to amend constitution** to include GSA membership on the College Senate - Motion approved
 - Timeframe: Applications 2nd week in February; voting 1st week in April
- Optimizing effectiveness of Senators and E-board
 - Senator Emmanuel Abreu offered suggestion to stagger elections from schools so that Senators are not all brand new at the same time.
 - Get previous senators involved
 - Every school would have election every semester to vote in one senator each time
 - Still keep full year term
 - Senator Andrea Gustafson proposed to have a meeting every three weeks.
 - Suggestion to make time in between meetings more meaningful – Secretary Donkor will be sending out phone senator phone numbers to group.
 - Senator James Doran suggested making the Senate similar to a hybrid course.
 - Utilize discussion board on Angel
- Graduate Student Conference - stand-alone academic event
 - Students present research, projects, theses
 - Involve faculty to encourage participation
 - Will fall within the Student Welfare Committee (Ashley Lanning, Emmanuel Abreu, Paul Perez)
 - Deliverable by spring 2014
- GSA should make t-shirts, Pins, Pens, and things to give out.
 - Motion for **Senator Kaitlyn Gardner to chair PR Committee** – motion approved
- GSA should do community service
 - Motion for **President Thomas Waters to chair Community Service Committee** – motion approved (Paul Perez willing to help)
- Muhammed Sumbundu represented GSA at the SUNY Assembly Annual Conference in Rochester. At conference, discussed issue of obtaining bus passes for graduate students.
- President Thomas Waters will receive notification regarding the Presidential search. One graduate student will serve on search committee.

CONSTITUENT QUESTIONS:

1. Senator Emmanuel Abreu inquired as the creation of the agenda. President Waters clarified that the agenda is created during a meeting with the executive board and Dr. Railey. The agenda is posted online and in Angel one week prior to the meeting. Senator Gustafson expressed concern as her updates were not included in the agenda. She contacted Secretary Donkor but the agenda had already been posted. Senator Gustafson requested that committee chairs be contacted prior to the submission/posting of the agenda.
2. Senator Ashley Lanning asked if students request a certain amount in their funding requests. President Waters clarified that students indicate the total cost of the trip and the amount funded is based on the criteria in the Constitution.

ADJOURNMENT at 7:10 p.m.