GSA February Business Meeting
March 9, 2018
Technology Building, Room 160

<u>Friday March 9, 2018</u>

5:30 pm-6:30 pm

I.   Call to Order: 5:41 PM
II.   Roll Call: President Murphy, Vice President Ramos, Senator Bonilla, and Dean Miller. Note that candidates for the GSA Executive Board Election and Graduate School Graduate Assistant Tiffany Wagner are in the gallery. **No Quorum**.
III.   Approval of the Agenda
        a. N/A
IV.   Approval of the Minutes
        a. N/A
V.   Public Comment
VI.   Old Business
VII.   New Business
        A. Reports
            1. Dean's Report
                a. On May 11, the Graduate Research Fair is taking place in Houston Gym. Last year, 42 students participated and this year we hope to increase that number. During the event, we will also be hosting the 4-minute thesis contest, an opportunity for up to ten students to creatively present their thesis to the audience. Participants will receive $50 and the winner will receive $250. Lastly, students who participate in the fair who submit their posters on or before May 4.
            2. Advisor's Report
                a. No Report
            3. President's Report
                a. I would like to welcome Chad Austin, who in the absence of Executive Vice President Nelson has grown an increasing interest in the GSA. Because of this, and my knowledge of his work ethic I am appointing him as Executive Vice President for the remainder of our term. Due to not having quorum, this will be administered via an e-vote in the coming days. I am also excited to report that we have contested elections coming up next week, from March 12-18. Thank you to VP Ramos for helping me hang flyers throughout the campus and good luck to the candidates in the upcoming election. As members of the GSA are aware, I regularly mention transitions. I am excited to prepare our next Executive Board to continue on the foundation

built by the current and previous e-boards and hope to prepare them to hit the ground running at the start of the fall semester.

    4. Vice President for Finance Reports

        a. The rate of funding request has surprisingly diminished this semester. Helping the organization expect a balanced budget for the rest of the year. However, we keep strong expectation that some funding request will still be coming in due to conferences mainly being organized in April. President Murphy and I have also been in contact with the alumni association in order to partake in the upcoming bandits game. We have requested 10 tickets that we plan heavily subsidizing for out members of the GSA and Graduate students.

    5. Senator Reports

        a. No Reports

  B. Appointment of Chad Austin as Executive Vice President

    a. Vote could not be administered due to lack of quorum. Vote to be administered online.

  C. Recommendations for 2018-19 GSA

    a. GSA Representatives and members of the gallery conducted a SWOT analysis on the GSA. A summary of the report is attached as addendum one.

VIII. Closing Comments

  a. President Murphy: Thank you to the members of GSA and gallery for their participation in the SWOT exercise. We will be compiling this data and sharing with the Senate for feedback online, prior to a final presentation at the April 20 GSA Business Meeting.

IX. Adjournment: 6:33 PM

Addendum One: GSA SWOT Summary

Strengths

- Management: Leadership (x3)
- Outreach: Information sharing via email (x2), Networking, Relationships Across Disciplines, and Access to the Administration
- Mission: Promoter of Graduate Research and Professional Development (x2), We have a GSA (x2), and Building a Campus Wide Community
- Openness: Accessibility for all Students

By virtue of being the only comprehensive college in SUNY with a Graduate Student Association, GSA leadership already has the advantage of credible access to administrators, and legitimacy to act in the interest of the graduate community at SUNY Buffalo State as the sole elected representative body for the campus graduate community. Moreover, through the distribution of information to students, physical and digital accessibility to all students, and the ability to promote and advance the research and development of the Buffalo State Graduate School community and reputation.

Weaknesses

- Engagement: No Community Presence
- Commitment: **Senator Attendance (x4)**, Student Body **Commitment/External Commitments (x3)**, No Organizational Goals, Lack of Interest, and Continuity
- Publicity: Awareness (x4), **Access (Promotion of GSA Benefits)**
- Interest: **Enrollment (PT>FT x2)**, Involvement Varies from School to School, and **Issues that Matter**

Despite credible strengths, the GSA works in alignment for formidable weaknesses. Due to low membership attendance at meetings and lack of digital participation, the organization has minimal community presence, which further reduces buy in from our constituency. These deficiencies further contribute to reduced access to GSA services, varying degrees of involvement by school, and determining the issues that students need us to address. In addition to these deficits, attendance and lack of representation reduce the capacity of the GSA to develop accomplishable goals, and to move the organization forward.

Opportunities

- Interest: **Issues that Matter**
- Publicity: **Access (Promotion of GSA Benefits, x2)**
- Networking: Internal/External Collaborations (x3), Annual Events (x3), Networking (x2), Recruitment (x3), Distributing Information Sooner (x2), New Students each Semester, more Efficient Use of Social Media, Leadership Opportunities, and Information Sharing with Students, Faculty, and Staff

Although apparent weaknesses exist, opportunities are abundant. With each semester bringing forward a new class into our community, reinvention can be accomplished at virtually any time. Through the establishment of a regular event calendar, increasing outreach to both campus offices and external organizations, and informing our constituency sooner the GSA can better enable both its staff and community to increase its engagement. Moreover, through to implementation of diversified communication channels, the GSA can further connect with all of our students, instead of those who use the current organizational communication platforms. By way of implementing the above concepts,

organizational publicity would increase resulting in increased student access to GSA services and advocacy efforts.

Threats

-   GSA Members: Egos, **Senator Attendance**
-   Finances: **Enrollment (PT>FT x2)**, Limited Budget
-   External: **External Commitments**, Winter Travel (Small Travel Windows)
-   Availability: Friday Meetings and Student Disengagement

Lastly, threats to the organization are partially a result of life events impacting the membership and FTE, which is directly linked to the level of funding available to the GSA. To perform, it is imperative that representatives of the organization attend functions/meetings, and that they utilize their positions to voice issues impacting our community. As a component of the human condition, the organization also must face the personalities and egos that make up the organization, particularly the decisions we make in regards to our actions or inaction. As the awareness of the GSA increases, its ability to adequately serve its constituency will be diminished unless a fee or enrollment increase aligns with increased demand.