

Graduate Student Association (GSA)

Meeting Minutes

September 25, 2015 Ketchum Hall, Room 219

Call to Order

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was adopted unanimously.

Remarks from the President, Christine Matos: President Matos welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the semester. She stated that the Information on Social Welfare Committee still needed members. **Treasurer Danielle Delia** is the Chair of the committee. **Senator Monet Lewis** and **Senator Ashley Weselak** committed to being members of the committee. **President Matos** also stated that the Budget Committee needed a Chair and members. **Secretary Courtney Blake** committed to being the Chair while **Senators Dan Shaw, Ashley Weselak, and Monet Lewis** committed to being members.

Remarks from Administrative Liaison, Dr. Kevin Railey: **Dean Railey** stated that it is important for all of us to encourage one another and to understand that this is a learning curve. GSA provides things to the graduate students that cannot be obtained by other means. It is important for us to ask questions and plan together so that Officers and Senators can help make students aware of the resources GSA can equip them with.

Remarks from faculty Advisor, Dr. Andrew Nicholls: **Dr. Nicholls** stated that GSA has only been around for a few years. We need to make sure that not only we, but other students, take part in the functions that are offered.

Remarks from the Treasurer, Danielle Delia: **Treasurer Delia** stated that \$38.61 was spent on food expenses for our meeting today. The budget for each meeting is \$40.00, which means that we were within our budget. It was suggested that we make a list of foods that we like so that **Treasurer Delia** can purchase items that we would prefer to eat. **Treasurer Delia** continued to state that only one student requested funding in which the student was approved and received funding. There is over \$64,000.00 in the account for funding students for things such as conferences and research projects. This is not always the case because there have been times in the past where there was a high influx of requests however, this current situation is good for us because we can provide students with resources that they may not be able to obtain elsewhere; we just need to advertise GSA funding abilities.

New Business: Motion for Constitutional amendment for the Vice President to be in charge of the Graduate Student Research Fair. **Treasurer Delia** seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous and the Constitution will be amended.

Motion for Constitutional amendment for the President to be in charge of the website updates. **Treasurer Delia** seconded the motion. Discussion ensued as to whether or not this meant that it was only the President that would be able to add/delete/change content on the website. It was clarified that should no one else want to add/delete/change content that it would be the President's responsibility to do so and does not limit the abilities of other members of the GSA. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

Motion for Constitutional amendment for how the Senators are voted in. **Treasurer Delia** seconded the motion. **Treasurer Delia** suggested that all Senators be present in order to vote on this so as to protect the voice of the entire student body. **Dr. Nicholls**

stated that there is rarely any department on this campus that gets 100% attendance for their meetings and that it is important to note that life does get in the way and the likelihood of everyone being in attendance to vote on this is unrealistic. **Senator Weselak** suggested staggering the voting in the meetings. It was suggested that we send an email notifying the officials that everyone does not have to be present to vote and that members could give another member their ballot (by proxy) or cast their vote electronically. **Senator Lewis** suggested that there be a two-week period for people to cast their votes after the amendment has been discussed. Motion for the voting by proxy or by email has been approved unanimously and will be amended to the student constitution.

Marketing Campaign: What can GSA do for you? Need to try to get more students involved and using the resources. Most students are unaware of what we are and what we do. We need to get them to consult us and get money out to the student body. Most students don't think of us as a community when in fact we are. They are already paying the GSA fee and they could benefit from it in many ways. We need to build the sense of community and support. **Senator Lewis** proposed having a presence in the Student Union during Bengal Pause. **Treasurer Delia** spoke about the Graduate Student Commons and advertising the benefits of having and utilizing the commons. It was also suggested that hosting a study-in session would hopefully get graduate students to see the benefits of the commons while getting them more involved with other students and organizations.

Secretary Blake referenced **Senator Lewis's** idea but said that having a table during Bengal Pause would not be beneficial because most graduate students are not on campus at that time. Instead, **Secretary Blake** suggested that the GSA have tables set up in

buildings with high volumes of graduate students so that the GSA members could hand out coffee, tea, and literature about GSA in hopes of obtaining a higher level of student involvement. It was decided that the Budget Committee would look into the cost of this and report back on this at the next meeting. Moreover, **Secretary Blake** spoke to the televisions that are displayed within the Student Union and Bulger Communication Center stating that the televisions advertise a lot of the events and organizations held on campus. Since these two buildings do not receive a high volume of graduate students, **Secretary Blake** proposed that the GSA purchase televisions to install in buildings such as Ketchum, Bacon, and the Classroom Building so that graduate students can see the events that are relevant to them. All Officers, Senators, **Dean Railey** and **Dr. Nicholls** liked this idea and it will be further investigated and discussed. **President Matos** added that the GSA may want to consider collaborating with the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) to get them in graduate school and actively participating in GSA as well as other student organizations upon entrance into graduate school. **Dean Railey** stated that there are about 1,000+ graduate students and nowhere near 1000 students voted. It is a challenge to get the students involved. **Senator Lewis** suggested that for the next campaign, candidates make a speech for when elections are held. Some members thought this was a good idea but it is a topic that needs to be discussed more. **Senator Shaw** said that he works for the Career Development Center (CDC) and that we could advertise services provided such as assistance with developing and refining resumes, cover letters and events such as job fairs.

President Matos proposed the idea of a Graduate Honors Society. All attendees of the GSA meeting agreed with the idea. Requirements still need to be established for this.

Senator Lewis said that there should be a Graduate Honors Convocation and that the Honor Society could be a subcommittee to the GSA. Cords (color(s) are to be determined) would act as the reinforcer for obtaining a high GPA and would hopefully draw others to the campus, achieving higher standards, and becoming involved in more campus related activities. It was agreed on by all attendees that graduate students deserve the same recognition that undergraduate students receive for their accomplishments. An idea is to create and send out a survey asking students for their input on the honors program and things that they would like to happen with GSA or implemented by GSA.

Dean Railey brought up the idea of GSA members having nametags and possibly a plaque that commemorates our service to the Buffalo State campus and the Graduate student body. The plaque would be put in the Graduate Student Commons. All attendees liked this idea and it will be discussed in further detail at a later time.

Movement to Adjourn is seconded. Session has ended.

Attendees:

Dean Kevin Railey

Dr. Andrew Nicholls

President Christine Matos

Vice President Joseph Tucceri

Treasurer Danielle Delia

Secretary Courtney Blake

Senator Ashley Weselak

Senator Daniel Shaw

Senator Dan Fynch

Senator Monet Lewis

Senator Nicole Cannarozzo