

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

MINUTES OF MEETING

Monday, February 13, 2023. Time: 8:00pm | *Meeting called to order by* Vice-President, Ijaz Ul-Haq

Attendance

*Goodness Nze-Igwe	*Kevin Pham	Chris Donovan	GUESTS
*Omid Sedighi	Ijaz Ul Haq	Koryna Boudinot	Doug Bent
*Villalpando, Michael A	Justin MH Salisbury	Amani Ansari	Cody Hemenway
*Ye-Jee Kim	Sandra Nnadi	Irfan Tahir	Hannah Depres
*Jenan Husain	Erica Lamkin	Michael Tobin	Lokota Sanborn
*Bren Marie Cable	Cynthia Forehand	Holly Parker	Jane Barber
*Kanayo Ikeh	Banjamin Ryan	Rigo Melgar-Melgar	Chief Don Stevens
*Meghan Owens	Tamara Parks		Deb Velto
*Alison Hall	Meredith Grove		Jim Taylor
*Anna Kim	Bella Bennett		Jim Brannon
*Rubaina Anjum	Lucy Drummond		Ivanik Lia
*Patrick Payne	Nina L. Smolyar		Jaques T Watso
*Massi Khodaverdi	Evan Ulrich		Rich Holschuh
*Dan Peipert	Juliana Neira		Holly
*Katherine Booth	Eshita Jhahan		Morgan L
*Shahmeer Patel	Vitoria Cardoso		Katherine Aho
*Atoosa Parsa	Cara Simone		Vera
*Baxter Worthing	Keira Malone		Ray

*SENATORS

Approval of previous meeting minutes

Jenan Husain moved the motion to approve the minutes, it was seconded by Bren Cable. Senators voted to approve the minutes.

Treasurer report

Jenan Husain made the presentation on behalf of the Treasurer. The following was spent in Fall 2022:

Stipends	\$4250
GSS Events	\$3502
Sponsorship	\$1150
Coffee Hours	1022
TOTAL SPENT	\$9924

\$250 for grads give back and \$500 for public forum was previously budgeted but not used. In savings, previous GSS exco left about \$11000. Proposed budget for 2023 Spring semester is \$17,770. Kevin Pham moved the motion to approve the budget, Rubaina Anjum seconded the motion. Senators voted to have the budget approved.

Club Recognition

Career Mobility Club

The purpose of the club is to introduce students to STEM careers outside academia by organizing monthly exploration series and inviting people outside academia with STEM degrees for seminar presentations. 20-25 students normally attend each event. In Spring, workshops will focus on skills that can help students expand their career. Patrick Payne moved the motion to recognize the club, Shameer seconded, and Senators voted.

Rethinking Economics

The goal of the Rethinking Economics club is to foster economic education that is sustainable, just, and efficient, and create awareness of alternative ways of economic thinking. Jenan Husain moved the motion to recognize the club, it was seconded by Patrick Payne and Senators voted to recognize the club.

Sustainable Development Policy, Economics and Governance (SPDEG) Club

The goal of the club is to actively promote SDPEG students' interest. Organize activities and events that bring SPDEG students together, help develop academic and professional skills. Dan Peipert moved the motion to approve the club's recognition, Jenan Hussain seconded, and Senators voted.

Committee reports

Stipends Committee presentation by Chair, Bren Marie Cable

Announcement will be made on the decision to increase doctoral stipends and masters' stipends. Bren solicited for students to anonymously fill out forms about their living and income situation so the financial situation can be contextualized.

Events Committee presentation by Chair, Anna Kim

The events committee is planning the end of the academic year awards ceremony, will continue routine events (trivia, painting), singular events (axe throwing, Karaoke), will also work with the other GSS committees in having their events. Anna will invite committees on a rotating basis to discuss collaboration events.

Professional Development Committee presentation by Chair, Omid Sedighi

Events will be CV/Proposal writing workshop with career center, Alumni event, promote UVM Connect website among Grad students. UVM Connect is used for networking and job applications and currently used by undergrads.

Diversity Equity Inclusion and Accessibility committee presentation by Chair, Liz Sparks

The committee is working on an event that will be communicated soon.

Housing committee presentation by Chair, Patrick Payne

The committee drafted a Resolution collating the different needs of Grad students with respect to housing. The resolution will serve as the cornerstone of discussions with UVM administration particularly Richard Cate in the planning of new housing projects. The resolution stems from housing survey that has been done in the past.

They are currently working on drafting the housing survey for subsequent semesters. They are also working on transportation components that tally with off campus housing. The goal is to promote Grad student participation in the discussions especially on new housing projects, involvement of grad students is minimal now but hopefully should change in the future. The committee is hoping to do two workshops in April one on renters' rights and responsibilities and the other on tips for finding housing.

Health and Wellness Committee by Chair, Kevin Pham

The committee is working on a survey to gauge special interest groups in games, sports or TV shows as well as surveys to measure mental health among grad students. Kevin will be meeting with Erin Montgomery, to discuss how to get the survey rolling.

Ijaz stated that the Senate makes the decisions on behalf of the Student Body and whatever ideas the E-board has is brought before the Senate for approval. He emphasized the need for peaceful dialogue and productive discussion.

Last meeting, the Senate asked for clarification on secret ballot which has been confirmed but due to the numerous email threads on the letter of Apology to the Vermont Abenaki tribes, Ijaz asked if the senate should go ahead with the letter of apology or withdraw it.

Patrick Payne stated that the initial idea of putting the letter together was based on lack of action from the University but given that the UVM officials gave a verbal apology to the Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs. Withdrawing the letter will be consistent with the action taken by Provost Prelock on behalf of the University.

Lokotah Sanborn, a guest and member of the Wabanaki community in Maine stated that submitting a letter of apology is a misstep because the senate was acting on lack of historical understanding about the groups in Vermont claiming to be indigenous. The UVM GSS needs to take seriously the input from the members of the Abenaki folks from Odanak who reside in Quebec. He recommended that the letter should not be submitted, or it will be looked at as a serious blight by future generations.

Baxter Worthing commended Patrick for his contribution and stated that regardless of the factual content which still needs to be debated, the letter is somewhat irrelevant now with the way it was originally written so he supported the idea that the letter of apology be withdrawn.

Patrick Payne moved the motion to withdraw the letter of apology from the senate meetings. Shameer Patel seconded and Senators voted to approve the withdrawal of the letter of apology. The GSS agreed to leave the issue for the UVM authorities and focus on the other issues that affect Grad students.