



# THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

## Graduate Student Senate Meeting of the Whole April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019

22 People in Attendance

Executive Council Attendees: Joey Campbell, Jessica Bocanegra, Aayudh Das, Mahafuza Aktar, and Kenna Rewcastle

Senator Attendees: Brandon Ackley, Jeffrey Adams, Jennifer Bower, Rosie Chapina, Kevin Fischer, Jacquelyn Gillen, Humon Heidarian, Kayla Johnson, Bijay K C, Rigo Melgar-Melgar, Rosy Neale, Bharat Poudel, Avery Rasmussen, Berke Tinaz, Lindsay Worley

Representative Attendees: Michelle DiPinto, Camille Marcotte

GSS Recognized Club Attendees: ISA, NSA, MRS, SPG, RGSA, IRSA, Women in STEM

Minutes were recorded by Kenna Rewcastle.

Attendance was taken via sign-in sheet.

*Meeting was called to order by Vice President Jessica Bocanegra at 11:05 am.*

### **Discussion with Dr. Meredith Nilés—Food Insecurity**

- Food insecurity is defined as limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate food, acquired by socially acceptable means; food insecurity is different from hunger.
- National food insecurity in the US affects 12.3% of households. Food insecurity among 4-year college students affects 26% of this population, ranging from 14% - 59% across different types of institutions.

- Early actions concerning food insecurity at UVM: on-campus working group, compiling resources, data collection
- A UVM food insecurity survey garnered a 24.5% response rate among all participation groups (undergrad, grad, medical students, faculty, staff, etc.)—including graduate students, medical students. Including staff in this survey is unique for surveys of this kind, and university staff are an understudied demographic.
- 15% to 19.6% of survey respondents faced food insecurity in the fall semester, compared to an 11% food insecurity in the state of Vermont; roughly 1 in 5 graduate students is food insecure at UVM.
- Staff food insecurity fell in between faculty and undergraduate rates.
- When undergraduates transition off campus (junior, senior year), food insecurity spikes; first generation students, people of color, and transgender/gender non-conforming students are especially vulnerable to food insecurity.
- Graduate students and medical students are 12x as likely to be food insecure as faculty.
- Many of the initiatives launched by the working group are *undergraduate* focused. Dr. Niles stated that it would be useful to have a GSS representative in this working group to help identify initiatives that would address food insecurity among graduate students.

Minutes from the previous meeting were unanimously approved as electronically distributed.

Congrats to new Executive Board Members; this election garnered the largest voter turnout in recent years.

## **Executive Board Updates**

### **Treasurer Updates: Aayudh Das**

- Budget update— budget unanimously approved for the 2019-2020 academic year.
- Budget Summary

<b>Graduate Student Senate FY 20 Budget Summary</b>	
<b>Carry Over from FY 19</b>	<b>\$10,417.00</b>
<b>Student Fees (Fall)</b>	<b>\$14,744.00</b>
<b>Student Fees (Spring)</b>	<b>\$14,744.00</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$39,905.00</b>

### **Secretary Updates: Kenna Rewcastle**

- Kenna Rewcastle gave a tour of the basic design for the new GSS website using Drupal. The website will go live before the Fall semester and will require GSS-wide dedication to producing media, including pictures, to fill the website’s design template.

## **Committee Updates**

### **Student Fees: Kevin Fischer and Avery Rasmussen**

- Permission was unanimously granted to allow the Student Fees Committee to work with the Center for Health and Wellbeing to create a pamphlet about mental health resources tailored to graduate students over the summer.

### **Diversity Committee: Humon Heidarian**

- The Diversity Committee is interested in developing diversity training for graduate students. What would the most effective type of diversity training for grads? Required D1/D2 classes? Required participation in workshops? Diversity workshops geared for graduate students in the role of TAs already exist and are required of those enrolled in graduate teaching program. D1/D2 classes are currently being reviewed at the undergraduate level to ensure that training is adequate and that learning outcomes are being met.

### **Curricular Affairs Committee: Camille Marcotte**

- Camille will be stepping down in her role as representative to the Curricular Affairs Committee. GSS is looking for a new representative to this committee starting in the Fall 2019 Semester.

*Meeting adjourned at 13:08.*