



Graduate Student Senate Meeting of the Whole—October 3rd, 2018

28 People in Attendance

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

Senator Attendees: Brandon Ackley, Jeffrey Adams, Rosie Chapina, Jessica Cotton, Kevin Fischer, Tatiana Gladkikh, Humon Heidarian, Molly Hurd, Autumn Johnson, Kayla Johnson, Matthew McCabe, Rigo Melgar-Melgar, Jaspreet Singh Nagi, Rosy Neale, Emme O'Rourke, Bharat Poudel, Andrew Ridgeway, Berke Tinaz, Ashley Waldron, Lindsay Worley, and Robert Worley

Representative Attendees: Aarzo Grover, and Camille Marcotte

GSS Recognized Club Attendees: ISA, NSA, MRS, UVMSPG, RGSA

Attendance was called by Secretary Kenna Rewcastle.

Meeting was called to order by Vice President Jessica Bocanegra at 11:03 AM.

Minutes from the last Senate Meeting on September 12th, 2018, were approved unanimously and will be released on GSS website.

Executive Board Reports

Vice President:

- President Sullivan will be in attendance for the November 2nd Senate Meeting.
- VP initiated discussion concerning topics to be discussed during President Sullivan's presence at our next meeting.

- Senators suggesting inquiring about the status of the graduate student housing discussion.
- Campbell suggested that all committee chairs prepare discussion points to be posed to President Sullivan during his visit.
- Senators would also like to inquire about the President's knowledge of the policies surrounding the use of alcohol in university research.

Committee Reports–Faculty Senate

Education and Research Technologies Committee Meeting (Kayla Johnson)

- New Chief Information Office: Simeon Ananou
- 2018-2019 goals for the Committee:
 - Improve UVM portal which provides course descriptions.
 - Improve and provide technological resources for ACCESS students.
 - Make the emergency system more accessible.
 - Improve communication with SAC and Research Data Management Committees.
- Senators voiced concerns with lack of availability of certain software for student download.

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Arts Committee Meeting (Brandon Ackley)

- Guest speaker spoke about small grants for faculty members, providing other resources for faculty members to help them be competitive in their fields.
- Discussed the Student Research Conference, making SRC more inclusive of graduate students.
- A discussion was initiated among Senators surrounding graduate student recognition and issuing more research-focused awards, as the balance of graduate student accolades is heavily skewed towards teaching awards.
 - Campbell suggested establishing an award for Graduate Student Mentors.
 - Bocanegra suggested establishing an award for leadership within the university.
 - Other awards suggested: award for innovative research, discipline specific awards (i.e. physical sciences vs. humanities).
- Das, as chair of Finance Committee, brought it to the attention of the Senate that over 30% of Graduate College Mini-Grant applicants had not presented at an SRC, making them ineligible for these grants.

Student Affairs Committee Meeting (Aarzo Grover)

- The Committee will not be implementing an integrated platform for course evaluations.
- Discussed restrictions on the use of the UVM logo.
- Discussed the policies surrounding outside class events (such as fieldwork, etc.).

Committee Reports–GSS Committees

Student Fees Committee (Kevin Fischer)

- Fischer presented table of how the Comprehensive Fee is broken down, and how this fee has increased from FY 2017 to FY 2018.
- Committee, in the short-term, is focused on increasing the transparency of the breakdown of the Comprehensive Fee.
- Committee will begin discussing how to influence the way these fees are charged and spent moving forward, increasing the benefit that graduate students receive for these fees.
- Concerns were voiced by senators concerning the mismatch between increases in the student fees vs. increases in graduate student stipends.

Constitution Bylaws Revisionary Committee (Brandon Ackley)

- Ackley brought forth several suggestions developed by the Committee to improve the GSS Constitution and Bylaws.
- Committee requested permission to act outside of senate to correct typographical errors in the Constitution and Bylaws: a motion was made to grant the committee this permission, passed unanimously (3/4 majority required).
- While our Bylaws allow the Communications Director, Secretary, and Treasurer to vote at Senate meetings, GSS has functionally been operating so that these Executive Council Members do not vote, so the first suggested amendment formalizes this (only senators vote at senate meetings, doesn't affect quorum).
- The Committee proposes requiring ad-hoc committees to terminate after 12-months, to be re-instated if needed each year by a vote of the Senate.
- The Committee also suggested an amendment where the VP (instead of the President) should be notified of senator proxies and suggested eliminating the limit to the amount of times that you can proxy each semester.
- The Committee proposed several clauses that essentially address the process transitioning adhoc committee to permanent standing committees.
- The Committee proposed transition the Campus and Community Engagement Committee from an action committee to a permanent standing committee.
- The Committee proposed the elimination of Bylaws Article IX which allowed for the ratification of the original bylaws and is no longer functional.

Parking Committee (Bob Worley)

- Committee will draft a graduate student parking survey.
- Committee will initiate discussions with the UVM Parking Services to ask about the parking constraints for faculty and any future plans for parking at UVM.

Campus and Community Engagement Committee (Mara Hintz)

- Long term goals: increasing GSS representation, graduate orientation, increasing presence on website and social media.

Stipend Committee (Matt McCabe)

- Primary goal is to determine if grads are being compensated fairly considering cost of living in Burlington and compensation relative to institutional peers.

- Committee will embark on a fact-finding initiative to assess cost of living and compensation statistics for graduate students.
- Graduate College is initiating a re-assessment of graduate stipends, stipend committee chairs will be invited to participate.

Maternity and Family Leave Committee (Kayla Johnson)

- Long term goals: paid maternity and family leave
- Short term goals: establish transparency surrounding health insurance for those taking medical leave, provide a graduation timeline extension for those who take maternity and family leave

A motion was made and approved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes, passed unanimously.

Housing Committee (Joey Campbell)

- Meeting will be happening Thursday evening (10/4/2018) with interested university administrators concerning housing needs for graduate students.
- Committee asked for permission to act in response to time-sensitive offers from the administration following a majority vote by the housing committee. A motion was made to grant this permission and was passed unanimously.

Club Renewals and GSS Recognized Club Business

- Club Renewal: Rubenstein Graduate Student Association; motion to approve the renewal this committee was approved unanimously without discussion.
- ISA (Aayudh Das) presented justification for receiving GSS funds to sponsor Diwali Night. This expense was previously approved and incorporated into the GSS Budget for 2018-2019.

New Business

- Brandon Ackley presented a free opportunity for therapy dogs to come to campus during a convenient time for graduate students.
- Brandon Ackley also asked for ideas concerning collaboration between GSS and Faculty Senate, meeting will occur on 10/4/2018.

Kevin Fischer made a motion to move into executive session, approved by unanimous vote.

After moving out of executive session, a motion was made and seconded, and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 12:12 pm.

