

GSO Senate – Minutes – December 4, 2007

The meeting begins with 19 Senators and 5 Executives.

1) Welcoming Remarks

President Soule congratulated the senators and thanked them for coming.

* President Soule announced that VP Gersch is about to graduate and step down from his position. President Soule asked for nominees among the senators for the position of GSO VP.

* President Soule also asked for volunteers for the GSO election committee, supervising the elections of next year's executive board. Jackie Lee (NYPIRG, non-voting member) and William Lahti (Computer Science). Kate Klein (Genetics) motioned to approve the appointments. They were unanimously approved.

* Dean Stein's Safety committee: Cengiz Erisen (Political Science) and Dylan Selterman (Psychology) volunteered to serve on it. Rebekah Schiller (Physics) motioned to approve the appointments. They were approved unanimously.

2) Approval of the Agenda

Kate Klein (Genetics) motioned to approve the agenda. It was approved unanimously.

3) Approval of October Meeting Minutes

The agenda was not sent yet, so it was tabled and will be brought up for approval during the next senate meeting.

4) GradMag Report

Eileen Chanza, the GradMag editor, presented the topics of the upcoming issues. Asked senators to send suggestions for future topics they would like to see in it. There were no questions to Eileen.

5) Transportation and Parking

Representatives from Facilities and Services and from Transportation and Parking Operations presented the current initiatives and some future initiatives, as well as their fields of responsibility. During the last year they worked on substantially improving the routes and purchasing much more environment-friendly and newer buses. Future initiatives include some more improvements to bus routes, increasing commuter "green" parking spaces, and university bus service-projects. The senators had some questions and suggestions for the representatives.

6) Internal Committee Reports

a) Budget Committee

Treasurer Longobardi presented the GSO expenditures for last month and the amounts still available on the different lines. RAP expenditures are going slowly so far, but more requests are supposed to kick in during the second part of the academic year.

* A representative from the Behavioral Ecology Group asked for funding for a talk. The Anthropology department will fund some of it, and the GSO was asked to add \$880 (out of a total cost of \$1380). Helen Jolly (Anthropology) motioned to approve the funding. The funding was approved unanimously.

b) Social Concerns Committee

VP Gersch presented a letter that he sent to the Center of Prevention and Outreach. He urged senators to make sure that there is a point person to turn to in their departments in any cases of disruptive behaviors. He also announced that he is about to step down from the VP position at the end of the month, as he is about to graduate.

c) Housing Committee

Dan Woulfin (History): There are over 100 vacancies in Schomburg and Chapin. Campus Residences has gone through their waiting list and have informed all residents that they will not allow them to break their rental agreements. Expect an email over the listserve to send out to your departments. The Chapin Community Center is moving forward. Campus Residences will be meeting with the Chapin Apartments Residents Association soon to hopefully finalize and approve the design.

d) NAGPS

Speaker Antonenko attended a national conference of NAGPS in Texas as a representative of the Stony Brook GSO. He met with GSO representatives from other universities and discussed GSO issues with them. He informed the senators about different issues that came up during the conference and are relevant to graduate students. One of the issues was that previously (until 1986) Grad student stipends were not taxable. There is currently an attempt to reinstitute this.

e) NYPIRG Report

* Jackie Lee - Currently, NYPIRG is collecting as many comments as possible proposing that the New York State needs to offer fewer pollution allowances in the program and limit greenhouse gasses from all polluting power plants to combat global warming and fix a loophole in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is a cooperative effort of nine Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern states, including New York State, to discuss the design of a regional cap-and-trade program initially covering carbon dioxide emissions from power plants in the region. Under the plan, participating states will stabilize power plant emissions and decrease pollution by 10% by 2019. Please take a moment to sign and hand back comments to the Department of Environmental Conservation. Secondly, we are hiring undergraduate and graduate students for next semester's internship program right now. If you are interested in getting involved in NYPIRG please contact NYPIRG at jlee@nypirg.org.

* Speaker Cheryl Lynch - The Second Circuit Court of Appeals case made an important decision regarding the use of student activity fees. NYPIRG is encouraged to see important protections for student rights included in this recent decision. We are happy to be a part of this dialogue and can answer any questions that may arise, so feel free to contact us. The Rules and Constitution Committee will look at this.

* President Soule invited the senators for a beer in the University Cafe. Kate Klein (Genetics) motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eran Shor