

GSO Senate – Minutes -- September 12, 2006

The meeting begins with 23 Senators and 4 Executives

1) Welcoming Remarks

The President welcomes Senators to the start of the new Senate year. The President advises that because a Speaker has not been elected, the Vice-President holds the responsibility to Chair. The Vice-President has ceded this responsibility to the President, who has previously served as Speaker of this Senate. The President was appointed Chair of the meeting with no objections.

2) Approval of the Agenda

a. *Sen. Hamilton (Psychology)* makes a Motion to approve the agenda with the following changes:

- i. Strike *Sen. Woulfin (History)* from the Housing committee report.
- ii. Move the NYPIRG Report to be delivered immediately after Committee Nominations.
- iii. Strike the Lounge Committee Report from the agenda.

The Motion was seconded by *Sen. Woulfin (History)* and approved by unanimous consent.

3) Approval of the May Minutes

a. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* makes a Motion to approve the minutes with the following changes:

- i. Insert the phrase “of \$150” to Section 4 after the phrase “a new Internal GSO Functions line.”
- ii. Strike the words “Not many” from the third sentence in Section 6.1 and replace with “A few.”

The Motion was seconded by *Sen. Gupta (Chemistry)* and approved by unanimous consent.

4) Graduate School Dean’s Report

- a. Dean Martin spoke to us about the importance of supporting the SEFA Campaign. At least \$1 a paycheck helps enormously. Those of us that already give to charity should do so through SEFA. \$250,000 was raised last year through SEFA.
- b. *Sen. Walls (Ecology & Evolution)* informs the Dean that graduate students sometimes have to take classes at the Manhattan campus at considerable expense and inquires about the School’s ability to facilitate student transportation between the campuses. Dean Martin points out that no required courses should be scheduled at the Manhattan campus when the student must travel during LIRR Peak Hours without the student being informed of such an arrangement prior to his or her enrollment in the program. Additionally, the sizable cost of a shuttle service between Stony Brook and Manhattan prohibits such a program and he regrets that the School cannot afford to provide this service at this time.

- c. *Sen. Colpitts (Theatre Arts)* informs the Dean that the MFA program has required courses in Manhattan without letting students know prior to enrolling in program. Dean Martin responds by saying that he was not aware of this, that, in his opinion, it should not be a practice that Departments should undertake, and that he would look into the problem.

5) Committee Nominations

- a. *Sen. Gupta (Chemistry)* makes a Motion to approve the following GSO Standing Committee appointments:
- i. Budget
 1. *Sen. Moore (Economics)*
 2. *Sen. Roelfs (Sociology)*
 3. *Sen. Patterson (Chemistry)*
 4. *Sen. Gupta (Chemistry)*
 5. Fen Wan
 6. Ryan Soule (Treasurer)
 - ii. Rules & Constitution
 1. *Sen. Woulfin (History)*
 - iii. Board of Appeals
 1. *Sen. Patterson (Chemistry)*
 2. *Sen. Gupta (Chemistry)*
 3. *Sen. Colpitts (Theatre)*
 4. *Sen. Pagano (Marine Sciences)*
 5. *Alt. Sen. Juliet Kinney (Marine Sciences)*
 - iv. Elections
 1. Louis Esparza, Secretary
 2. Scott Zotto (non-voting)
 - v. Housing
 1. *Sen. Woulfin (History)*
 2. Elena Yarritu
 3. Alton Frabetti (Vice President)
 - vi. Lounge Advisory
 1. *Sen. Moore (Economics)*
 2. *Sen. Hamilton (Psychology)*
 3. Ryan Soule (Treasurer)
 - vii. GSEU Liaison
 1. Victor Rosado
 - viii. Social Concerns
 1. *Sen. Walls (Ecology & Evolution)*
 2. *Sen. Brown (Ecology & Evolution)*
 3. Alton Frabetti (Vice-President)
 4. Scott Zotto (non-voting)
 - ix. GSELF
 1. Robert Gersch
 2. *Sen. Gupta (Chemistry)*
 3. *Sen. Walls (Ecology & Evolution)*

4. Dumaine Williams
5. Elena Yarritu

The Motion was seconded by *Sen. Walls (Ecology & Evolution)* and approved by unanimous consent.

- b. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* makes a Motion to approve the following University Committee appointments:
- i. Housing Planning
 1. *Sen. Woulfin (History)*
 - ii. President's Advisory Council
 1. Ryan Soule, Treasurer
 - iii. Student Assembly
 1. *Sen. Woulfin (History)*
 2. Andrei Antonenko, President
 3. Ryan Soule, Treasurer
 - iv. FSA Board of Directors
 1. Ryan Soule, Treasurer
 - v. FSA Finance
 1. Ryan Soule, Treasurer
 - vi. University Senate Executive
 1. Andrei Antonenko, President
 - vii. University Senate
 1. Andrei Antonenko, President
 2. Louis Esparza, Secretary
 - viii. Univ. Senate Academic Planning and Resource Allocation
 1. Louis Esparza, Secretary
 - ix. Univ. Senate Graduate Council
 1. Andrei Antonenko, President
 2. Ryan Soule, Treasurer
 - x. Univ. Senate Graduate Council Grievances and Appeals
 1. Andrei Antonenko, President
 2. Monicca Shanthanelson
 - xi. Univ. Senate Campus Environment
 1. *Sen. Walls (Ecology & Evolution)*
 - xii. Univ. Senate SPD Council
 1. *Sen. Bersamin (SPD)*
 - xiii. Univ. Senate Library Services Committee
 1. *Wentao Jiang (Comparative Literature)*
 - xiv. Univ. Senate Student Life
 1. *Sen. Woulfin (History)*
 - xv. College of Arts & Sciences Senate Executive
 1. Louis Esparza, Secretary
 - xvi. College of Arts & Sciences Senate
 1. *Sen. Colpitts (Theatre)*
 2. Louis Esparza, Secretary

- xvii. College of Arts & Sciences Senate Academic Judiciary
 - 1. Ryan Soule, Treasurer
- xviii. College of Arts & Sciences Senate Academic Standing and Appeals
 - 1. Andrei Antonenko, President
- xix. College of Arts & Sciences Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
 - 1. Sarah Martin

The Motion was seconded by *Sen. Walls (Ecology & Evolution)* and approved by unanimous consent.

6) NYPIRG Report

- a. Scott Zotto encouraged people to register to vote. He has voter registration materials on him at all times and it only takes a minute. Among the opportunities available in NYPIRG, there are various internships including an off-campus legislative internship. New this year is a NYPIRG Meet & Greet and he encouraged everyone to attend. There is a campaign against education cuts that NYPIRG is working on, in addition to working on affordable housing and the homelessness and hunger awareness drive.
- b. Scott is involved in the Small Claims Court and you can contact him at x2-6458 or stop by SBU 079 next to the SINC site if you need help. Volunteers are also welcome to help with taking phone calls.

7) New Editor

- a. *Sen. Naydan (English)* is the Editor-in-Chief of the new GSO publication, the GradMag, located on the World Wide Web at www.sbgradmag.org and accessible also from the GSO website. She encouraged everyone to go to it, read it, contribute to it, and spread the word.

8) Budget Committee Report

- a. The Treasurer announced that the external financial audit showed that GSO is in excellent financial condition. There is a \$12,000 surplus from last year. The Executive Council has been brainstorming new program initiatives and ideas since this is an opportunity to provide new services to students. We encourage students to come up with ideas for services that they would like the GSO to provide.
- b. *Sen. Walls (Ecology & Evolution)* makes a Motion to change the line item in the budget labeled “The Graduate” to “The Graduate Magazine” in order to reflect the name of the new GSO publication. The Motion was seconded by *Sen. Hamilton*. The Motion passed by a vote of 22-0-0.
- c. The Budget Committee recommends that the Senate increase Rich Laffers’ salary. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* makes a Motion to increase Rich Laffers’ salary from \$100/month to \$200/month and to pay him through the summer. Mr. Laffers has specifically committed to working on the Graduate Magazine and his doubled stipend will reflect his doubled workload. The Motion is seconded by *Sen. Bersamin (SPD)*. The Motion

passed by a vote of 22-0-0. Because the difference in the line item in the previously approved budget differs by more than \$1000 from what was already approved by the Dean, this action is pending Dean Martin's approval and will need to be re-affirmed by the Senate in order for the change to be reflected in the budget.

- d. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* requests that in the future, the Treasurer ought to present the Senate with the financial health of the GSO by distributing a paper copy of the budget during the Budget Committee report in accordance with tradition.
- e. The Budget Committee recommends that the Senate increase the Office Manager's salary. *Sen. Gupta (Chemistry)* makes a Motion to increase the Office Manager's hourly wage from \$11/hour to \$14/hour to keep up with the cost of living and to reflect the increased number of tasks that the Office Manager performs, such as tracking GSO expenditures via an electronic database and providing services as a certified notary public. This is an increase to \$6700/year from \$5300/year. The Motion is seconded by *Sen. Walls (Ecology & Evolution)*. The Motion passes 22-0-0.
- f. The Budget Committee recommends that the Senate approve \$1505 for the IGSA Freshers Party. Representatives from IGSA indicate that the Freshers Event welcomes all new students to the event. They can expect games and the celebration of Indian culture. The event is open to all. A suggestion is made to the IGSA representatives to indicate that the event is free on the flyer. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* makes a Motion to approve \$1505 for the IGSA Freshers Party. *Sen. Gupta (Chemistry)* seconds the Motion. The Motion passes by unanimous consent.
- g. The Budget Committee recommends that the Senate approve \$500 for SBCSSA. The representatives from the organization indicate that they will organize a dancing event. The discussion included some disapproval of the fact that the event will take place at the same time as IGSA Freshers Party. *Sen. Patterson (Psychology)* makes a Motion to approve \$500 for the event. *Sen. Pagano (Marine Sciences)* seconds the Motion. Some concern was raised by *Sen. Naydan (English)* about the use of the disco ball after the event was over. The SBCSSA representatives responded that the ball would be reused for next year's event. The Motion to approve funding for the event in the amount of \$500 passes by unanimous consent.
- h. The Budget Committee recommends that the Senate approve \$580 to fund the Linguistic Speaker Series organized by the Graduate Linguistics Society. The representative from the organization stated that this is an interdisciplinary event with speakers from different departments. *Sen. Hamilton (Psychology)* makes a Motion to approve \$580 for the event. *Sen. Suh (Linguistics)* seconds the Motion. The Motion passes by unanimous consent.
- i. The Treasurer reminds the Senate that RAP funding is tied to Senator attendance and encourages Senators to attend the meetings regularly to ensure RAP funding for students in their department. Departments must

have a Senator present at two out of the last three meetings in order for students in that department to be eligible for RAP funding.

- j. The Treasurer fields a question on obtaining Departmental Allocations. The Treasurer indicates that all relevant forms are available on the website, but that it will be sent over the Senate listserv.
- k. The Treasurer reminds the Senate of the updated Financial Bylaws which indicate that RAP submissions need to include original receipts in order for them to be processed. He also reminds the Senate that the GSO policy stipulates that food expenditures need to be itemized. If funding is requested to cover partial expenses not paid by another primary funding agency, an official written statement of funds provided and a photocopy of all receipts is required from the agency. The President indicates that amortization for driving your car is not a reimbursable expense by RAP. The Treasurer ends his report by reminding the Senate that RAP is capped at \$250.

9) GSELF Committee Report

- a. Robert Gersch reports that GSELF has a great website and encourages people to go to it.

10) Social Concerns Committee

- a. The Vice-President reports that the GSO Office has been cleaned up.
- b. The SCC is working on helping the victims of the Chapin fire.
- c. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* makes a “Motion to empower the President of the GSO to express his condolences to the family of the late Kermit Hall, President of the State University of New York at Albany, and the University at Albany Community on behalf of the GSO Senate and graduate student body.” *Sen. Gupta (Chemistry)* seconds the Motion. The Motion passes by unanimous consent.

11) Housing Committee

- a. *Sen. Bonsra (Pharmacology)* indicates that there is a problem with housing with someone in their department. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* suggested that the Senator have the student contact him and that he will follow up.

12) GSA Report

- a. Elena Yarritu is the current Graduate Student Advocate. She can be reached at the Graduate School at x2-1947.

13) Smoking Ban Resolution

- a. The President introduces a resolution to oppose the campus-wide ban on smoking. The President explains that the University Senate wants to enforce a ban on smoking on campus and that the Executive Council has drafted a resolution that they would like the Senate to pass. *Sen. Woulfin*

- (History)* makes a Motion to approve the resolution. *Sen. Naydan (English)* requests that the resolution be modified in the following ways:
- i. Replace the word “life” with the word “lives” in the last line of the second paragraph.
 - ii. Replace the collection of letters “newfound” with the words “new found” in the second line of the third paragraph..
- b. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* accepts the Senator’s modifications to the Motion. *Sen. Bersamin (SPD)* seconds the Motion. The Motion passes 20-0-3.
 - c. The President announces that the resolution will be introduced to the floor of the Undergraduate Student Government soon.

14) Speaker Nominations

- a. The President announces that a Speaker must be elected to run meetings, otherwise, the President will likely Chair Senate meetings in addition to his responsibility as President. The responsibilities of the Speaker include serving on Executive Council, Chairing Senate meetings, and Chairing the Rules and Constitution Committee.
- b. *Sen. Walls (Ecology & Evolution)* nominates *Sen. Gupta (Chemistry)* for Speaker.
- c. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* makes a Motion to table the election of a Speaker until the October Senate meeting and to place it at the top of the October agenda. *Sen. Gupta (Chemistry)* seconds the Motion. The Motion passes by unanimous consent.

The President reminds the Senate that there will be a training workshop on Roberts Rules of Order just prior to the October meeting.

Sen. Gupta (Chemistry) makes a Motion to Adjourn. *Sen. Bersamin (SPD)* seconds the Motion. The Motion passes by unanimous consent.

Respectfully Submitted,
Louis Esparza