

GSO Senate – Minutes – April 14, 2009

The meeting begins with 30 Senators and 5 Executives

1) Approval of Agenda and the March Meeting Minutes

The Agenda was approved unanimously.

The March 10 2009 minutes were approved unanimously.

2) Presidential Remarks

President thanked senators for attending the meeting, no important remarks were given

3) Report on the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Donna Buehler from EAP explained the different services offered by the program, she underlined that all graduate student employees (State and Research Foundation Payrolls) are eligible for this program benefits, which include but are not limited to:

Clinical Consultation

Management Consultation

Education & Training

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)

Organizational Consultation

4) Freewheel Report

Lee Brown and Matt Aiello-Lammens explained the mission of the club and how they help promote the use of bicycles on campus and long island. They invited grad students and the campus community to repair their bicycles on their facilities. They also emphasized that donations of bicycles, tools, parts and specially work time are always welcomed. Freewheel can also assist with safety equipment for graduate student bikers.

5) Internal Committees Reports

5.1) Budget Committee PART I – Funding Requests :

- Sarah Barber from the Psychology department requested \$900 for a talk by Dr Jessica Payne on the “Role of Sleep in Memory Transformation” to be held 05/06/09 on the psychology building
- Representatives from the Stony Brook ICE hockey team did not attend the meeting and their request was tabled
- Rachel Jacobs from the Behavioral Ecology Group requested \$726 for a talk by Dr Charles Nunn on Sex, Germs & Worms: Infectious Diseases in Primate Societies to be held April 20th 2009 at 4 pm in the Anatomical Sciences Seminar Room (HSC-T8) room 025
- GSO Indian Graduate Student Association requested \$750 for the Annual Spring Ball “Spring Romance” to be held on Sunday April 19th on SAC ballroom A. A

motion to approve 650 was put on the table, it was amended to \$750, the motion to approve \$750 passed unanimously

- Neica Shepherd from the Women's & Gender Studies department requested \$1210 for the graduate conference "risky business" to be held in Stony Brook Manhattan April 14th from 9:30 to 7:30 pm having Jasbir Puar as the keynote speaker the funds were approved unanimously
- Matt Engel from the Hera group requested \$500 for the talk "Sustainable Architecture: Civilization and the Environment" to be held on April 22 at 4 pm in the Wang theater. The talk will be held during Stony Brook's Earthstock celebration of earth day. The Funds were approved unanimously
- Jennifer Carter from the Philosophy department requested \$1500 for a talk by Annie Prinkle. A motion to approve \$1500 conditional to the speaker not having another event in the north-east region, in case she is invited to another event the travel cost will be reduced to compensate for the sharing of the travel cost was approved.
- Manuel Proissl from the Cinematography Club requested \$285.8 for the first annual Oscar Symposium to be held in Wang Center on May 14. The funds were approved unanimously

5.2) Social Concerns Committee

Vice-president Selterman explained to senators that the most recent smoking regulation approved by the administration prohibits smoking at less than 25 ft. from the buildings on campus. He also commented on the construction of new bike paths near Circle Drive, the positive outcome of the recycling program and on a project to give special protection status to the Ashley Shiff preserve on campus

5.3) Election Committee

Secretary Colmenares reminded senators that elections will be held in the week of April 27th to May 1st and asked for their contribution to encourage graduate students to vote. All the candidates for the executive committee introduced themselves and explained why they believe they are the most suited for the position they are running for, the candidates were:

- President
Dylan Selterman (Psychology)
- Vice President
Angel Gonzales (Psychology)
Gregory Sabino (Biochemistry)
- Treasurer
Chris Young (Materials Sciences)

- Secretary
Matthew Engel (Biomedical Engineering)
Joseph Ortiz (Materials Sciences)

5.4) NYPIRG

Andrew Morrison updated the senate in issues such as the current state budget which is finalized and on which the Tuition Assistance Program was reinstated. He also updated on a new bottle bill advocacy to expand it to include bottle water, and that the unclaimed deposits go back to the state's environmental fund.

5.5) Budget Committee PART II – Update on 2009-10 Operative Budget

Treasurer Young presented the tentative budget for the 2009-2010 academic year and opened the floor for comments and discussions, specially on lines such as the graduate publication and the New York research interest public group budgets. A non-binding opinion poll was taking to assess the interest of the senate on funding specific issues; the results of the polls were the following:

Funding of the Graduate Student Publication (GradMag)

- 8 votes for completely eliminating the line in the budget
- **17** votes for having a funding levels less than the current 08-09 budget
- 0 votes for keeping the line the same as the 09-09 budget

Funding for NYPRIG:

- 4 votes for completely eliminating the line in the budget
- **12** votes for funding the line between \$0 and \$6000
- 1 votes for funding it between \$6001 and \$12000
- No votes for \$12000

6) NAGPS Conference Report

Secretary Colmenares explained the objectives of the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students, the subjects discussed on the north-east region conference in Cambridge MA and told the senate that Stony Brook has one of the most broad-reaching graduate student governments on the region

7) Referendum Proposal

President Naydan explained the need to increase the mandatory activity fee for graduate students and proposed the following question for the referendum:

The mandatory student activity fee funds graduate clubs and department allocations, cultural and social events, talks and conferences, child care, the Legal Clinic, the Tax Clinic, the Resource Allocation Program (RAP), the Graduate Student Emergency Loan Fund, and other programs.

At present, the student activity fee is mandatory and all graduate students are billed according to the following Schedule:

- Full-time graduate students are billed a student activity fee of \$22.00 per semester

- Part-time graduate students are billed a student activity fee of \$7.00 per semester. Periodically, the Graduate Student Organization's Executive Committee and G.S.O. members assess the student activity fee to determine whether or not the fee should be raised. In order to provide more needed funds for the aforementioned services, would you like to raise the student activity fee to \$25 per semester for full-time graduate students and \$8 per semester for part-time graduate students?

Please check the box adjacent to your choice:

I vote to raise the student activity fee to \$25 per semester for full-time graduate students and \$8 per semester for part time students.

I vote NOT to raise the student activity fee.

A motion to approve the question proposed by President Naydan was approved unanimously.

8) Committee Appointments

Speaker Longobardi nominated Lila Naydan for the Alumni Board and Joseph Ortiz for the Stony Brook South Hampton Task Force, both nominations were approved unanimously

9) Union Update

Kira Schumann and Matt Engel gave an update on the current negotiations with the State of New York and the Research Foundation for graduate student employee contracts.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was cheerfully approved unanimously

Respectfully Submitted
Jose R Colmenares-Angulo
Secretary of the Graduate Student Organization