



## GSO Senate Meeting – May 3, 2011 – Minutes

### I. Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Paola Espinosa

- Thirty-seven senators present.

### II. Approval of Agenda, and April Senate Meeting Minutes

- Motion to add appendix to April Minutes (Budget allocations); second motion. Agenda and minutes approved.

### III. SBU President, Samuel Stanley, Addresses Senate

- Graduate students are the heart and soul of university, and critical contributors to scholarship.
- SBU faces financial crisis precipitated on us by the state.
- Interested in trying to increase philanthropic efforts for graduate students, but cannot make a specific announcement.
- Q&A:
  - Q: Masters programs are increasing, any plans to increase services for the volume of Masters students? A: Don't think there's been a concerted effort to look into this. Will bring up issue with Provost Kaler.
  - Q: Can you commit to listening to our issues pertaining to proposed fee increases and committing to transparency? A: Are we delivering services that are comparable to other universities? It's hard to do without fee increases, but trying to do our best. But we can have transparent discussions about where these fees are going. Modeling in part to what's been done in Buffalo.
  - Q: Along the same lines, how can we know in advance what is coming down the line in terms of fee increases? There seems to be a trend that as the state cuts back, university looks towards tuition and fees to make up for lost revenue. A: There's a fixed cost to operate, so when the state cuts support, we have to look for revenue from other sources. Drives the whole issue of how we can get the state to provide the support without the cuts. But in fighting with the state, we have not been very successful. So how do we deal with it? Not an easy answer. Goal is to provide a quality education despite these cuts.
  - What is your future vision of the university through these economic challenges? Reductions in departments, etc.? A: A couple of answers. First, must be careful that we don't do anything that's going to permanently damage the university. Things are cyclical and there will be a return to better times. However, return may not be back to times prior to budget cuts. So, we must run administrative components of the university more efficiently by streamlining processes, and finding ways to automate things. We hope to save tens of millions of dollars as we go forward. Academically, not trying to close departments but rather to share administrative components and resources, but this will also unfortunately involve some job losses. Going through programmatically and looking at where the strong areas are, and what is absolutely necessary. But not trying to cut departments. Have hope for the future: 1) outstanding faculty keeps us poised to be more competitive, and 2) philanthropic revenue/areas (e.g. asking alumni to invest in us



for our future). Trying to find things to do without causing permanent damage to academic reputation.

- Q: Rumors of new fees including athletic center and clinical skills center? Can we help in philanthropic efforts? A: Do not have information on athletic fees and such. Can't ask, legally speaking, grad students to be involved in philanthropic efforts. But can encourage you to express your opinion, in written letters, to your elected officials – not emails because letters or phone calls are the best and taken more seriously. Willingness to participate when donors are involved will be helpful.
- Q: Model of difficulty to raise tuition but easier to raise fees affects more disadvantaged population; how can we ameliorate this for those populations? A: Tuition is too low at SBU. Better model would be to raise tuition to provide a more quality education, for better faculty, and somehow help those families making less than \$60K. Fees should be tied into services, and not to make up lost revenue. Undergrad assembly of SUNY came out to support the increase in tuition.
- Froy, GSO President, presented gift to Stanley (book by Ralph Nader).

#### IV. Barbara Chernow, VP of Facilities, Presentation

- Facilities Master Plan for the next 10 years (2013 – 2023)
  - Still using capital master plan which ends in 2 years.
  - Concerned about sustainability, and basic principle is to 'do no harm.'
  - Concerns: 1) pedestrian safety, 2) connections between East and West sides of campus [alternatives: a) east-west alternative building concourse; b) north-south alternative; c) diagonal alternative – welcoming presence on the railroad] – so will take the best of all three alternatives; 3) circulation/traffic: new drop offs and roads; 4) parking
- Q&A:
  - Q: Parking garages don't have enough spots; any changes to parking? A: Yes, we have been doing that and will continue to do that. Parking rates are collectively bargained and thus East campus has not been able to catch up.
  - Q: Any adjustments to Roth corridor for a new bus route? A: Yes, will repave and widen.
  - Q: Residential welcoming area-- aesthetically pleasing currently with the path of trees, so buildings would be better away from there? A: Trying to keep residential traffic out of the major areas due to pedestrian safety concerns.
  - Q: Rumors of the hotel? A: Well, still is there, but courts are dealing with the issue now.
  - Q: Chapin apartments: improvement and maintenance? A: Campus residences is under another department.
  - Q: New computer science bldg.? A: Already underway; thus not on master plan.
  - Q: Energy efficient buildings; what about renovating old bldgs. to be energy efficient? A: Yes, already requested for funding for projects to renovate (campus green website/facilities website has info)



- Q: Fuel costs related to increase in demand for graduate housing? Are they anticipated? A: Yes, master plan has room for bldg. more graduate housing.
- Q: Green initiatives: any more, such as solar panels? A: 20% on LIPA bill; and on a contract with Calpine, so there are certain restrictions, solar panels being one of them.
- Q: Input for the design of the bldgs.? A: There is a program committee group that gathers input from faculty and people to give to architects for the design of the bldgs.
- Environmental stewardship website—there's a task force and information available on savings we can be involved in.

#### V. Swearing in of the Executive Council Officers for 2011-2012

- Speaker of the Senate, Paola Espinosa, inaugurated the newly elected GSO Executive Council members (see Elections Committee Report), whom took the oath of responsibility, and signed off on fiduciary responsibility forms.

#### VI. President's Report

- Met with Karol Gray (VP of Finance); she agreed that we need to meet for Best Practices for student fee increases. No fee increases yet, will have to be approved by Board of Trustees.
- Karol Gray agreed with tech fee being spent on grad student education.
- Senators should be involved in discussions and providing feedback for that tech fee being spent on grad student education.
- Karol Gray also agreed with the 15% cap on fee increases; promised to get the 22% proposed increase reduced to 15%, as the proposal is currently in Albany.
- President Stanley is looking for tuition increase, and commits to take 28% of tuition increase to help those who are economically disadvantaged.
- University Senate meeting: urging GSO to take a stand of the merging of women studies with cultural studies; passed a resolution asking for uniformity in fees between GAs, TAs, and RAs.
- Running out of money for RAP; must discuss the overspending of RAP; but Dean of Arts and Sciences said that if Budget Committee submits a proposal, they will give us the rest of the money that they committed to in the past, but did not give.
- Recommendation to overspend RAP, increase it, and ask for more contributions; grad student activity fee increase might be something to consider (this will be voted on in 2012).
- Reviewing Distinguished Travel Award applications (16 applications); will notify applicants by the end of the week.
- Question from the floor about University Senate's discussion of email privacy policy. Discussion was tabled until September.
- Question: there are 16 applications, and 13 spots. Any chance to fund them all? Maybe; will have to review the amounts in the application so may be a possibility.



- Student Life Awards nominations: Bill Wenzel, Adam Jacobs, Andrés Estefane, Samira Darvishi, and Catherine Salussolia.

#### VII. Vice President's Report

- Distinguished Travel Award: Dean Martin would like to keep the threshold high and therefore really only award those that have very strong applications.
- JFK pick-up for new international students; trying to keep costs under \$50. Two companies made bids in response to the Request for Proposals (RFP), but no decisions have been made yet. Will update via email. See Appendix D for update.
- Spring Festival (May 12): moved to campus – Ballroom A, right next to University Café. Will have live music at University Café and then Trivia Night to follow.
- Thanks for all your help this year!

#### VIII. RCC Report (proposed changes in **bold**)

- Quorum check: 35 Senators present.
- Motion to suspend rule requiring 10-day notice before Constitutional amendments are voted on. Motion seconded, and motion passes unanimously.
- Constitutional amendment:

#### Section C. Speaker of the Senate

f. shall chair the Rules and Constitution Committee **and the Committee of Academic Affairs.**

- Approved unanimously.
- Changes to the ICP:

#### **1.1 Budget Committee Guidelines (pg 4)**

C. The Committee's agenda at each meeting shall include:

iii. The BC will reach a decision for each proposal. During this time, discussion by non-committee members is out of order. Any decision shall include the budget category from which the funds will be allocated. If the requesting party is unsatisfied with the BC decision they may appeal and present the request to the GSO Senate for approval. If the request involves a member of the EC or the BC, the final decision shall be made by the Senate. The BC may determine to do any one of the following:

- i.1. Approve the proposal as it stands;
- i.2. Approve the proposal with revisions;
- i.3. Refer the proposal to the Senate as it stands;
- i.4. Refer the proposal to the Senate with revisions;
- i.5. Not approve the proposal;
- i.6. Table the proposal.

**E. The Treasurer shall include in his/her reports to the Senate, a summary of all BC requests and decisions.**



- Q: Is there a way that the Senate can object to any BC decisions? Maybe decisions can go out 24-hours prior to the Senate meeting (included with the Senate agenda).
- Discussion: do we want to increase the quorum for BC to 5?
- Motion to approve with the amendment that the treasurer's report be included with the Senate agenda (48 hours in advance).
- Motion that we vote on this at the same time as the program funding.
- Tabled until program funding point voted on.

#### 5.2.2. Employee salaries (pg 9)

#### **F. The line for the Event Coordinator is to pay an individual hired by the EC to manage the sound equipment and coordinate the events.**

- Person who organizes the concerts and maintains the sound equipment
- Q: Wording "to pay an individual" is vague. Can that be made more specific? Line has to be created and then the actual amount is introduced by the BC since it can be varied.
- Motion to change title from 'Event Coordinator' to 'Production Director.'
- Motion seconded, and approved unanimously.

#### 6.3 Program Funding (pg 16)

All funding requests must be submitted by the deadline stipulated by the BC and be approved prior to the date of the event. The Treasurer reviews requests for funding provided under this category, after receipt of a completed funding request proposal. All events that require a budget proposal require a presentation before both the BC and the full Senate as described in **Section 1. The Budget Committee**. Every student or group has the right to appeal the decision of the GSO BC and Senate in the Board of Appeals.

- Erased the requirement to present at Senate Meetings.
- Motion to change 'requesting party' to 'any member of the GSO.'
- Motion seconded, and approved unanimously.

#### IX. Committee of Academic Affairs Report

- See Appendix A.

#### X. Fee Increase Report

- See Appendix B (Letter from GSO to SUNY Board of Trustees).

#### XI. Budget Committee Report

- Funding requests:
  - CARA, Midnight Breakfast Social. Requesting \$200 from the 'General Cultural and Social Events' line to cover food, and supplies. General consent.
- Motion to overspend RAP by \$20,000
  - Unanimous consent.
- Budget presentation and vote
  - Income line —approved unanimously.



- Expenditures— approved unanimously.
- Contributions and public service— approved unanimously.
- Program funding— approved unanimously.

## XII. Elections Committee Report

- Results of 2011-2012 GSO Executive Council Elections:
  - President: Charilaos Papadopoulos received 91% of 115 votes.
  - Vice President: Stalin F. Mafla-Trujillo received 90% of 111 votes.
  - Treasurer: Eugenia Sidorova received 91% of 113 votes.
  - Secretary: Selin Gonen received 92% of 116 votes.

## XIII. Senator's Incentive Proposal

- Although the current GSO has been much more active this year in university-wide governance and decision making, the weight has been largely carried by the Executive Council and a select number of Senators. In order for the GSO to sustain its progress, all Senators will need to be more active in the coming years. Toward that end, a discussion has begun to achieve that. See Appendix C (Senator Award Proposal).
- Other idea from Senate: expand the RAP limit to Senators.
- Discussion tabled till September, and committee formed to review incentive proposal.
  - Committee members: Catherine Salussolia, Jen Sidorova, Paola Espinosa, Denise Fillion, Jason Hall.

## XIV. Meeting Adjourned

- Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Al Herrera-Alcazar, GSO Secretary.