

MINUTES
Graduate Student Association Meeting
2005-2006 Academic Year
February 20, 2006

- I. Welcome
 - A. Introductions

- II. Discuss requirements of Representatives
 - A. Come to monthly meetings (or send someone by proxy)
 - B. ***Encourage all students to sign up to the GSA listserv (5)***

Reps should encourage other students to sign up for the listserv. This is because the listserv is currently opt-in but all grad students should be on.

- C. Contact your Graduate Coordinator to have access to your listserv and forward all GSA announcements

- D. Post flyers for socials, GGSIC, etc.
 - ** Should committee membership be a requirement?

We have a lot of empty or low membership committees. Should we have membership required? Value of committees is that they can generate other ideas and have people dedicated to very specific projects. Is making it making mandatory too much?

Question: Who many people generally are on committees?

Daniel: It depends on need. If a big event is coming up then more people volunteer.

Comment: Have people sign up at the beginning of the year then make sure they are kept up through out the year.

Comment: Committees are valuable even if they don't meet regularly, and may allow people who don't come to GSA meetings regularly to participate.

- ** Could GSA benefit from 1 required posting to forum?

We have an online forum. In a course at UGA, Daniel and Todd were required to post and found it useful in the context of the course. Could this work for GSA too? Would each rep making 1 posting per month reasonable? The forum provides a space for reps to express themselves beyond the meeting. (Note: the requirement is really more of a suggestion, no one will actually be kicked out of representing)

Daniel: We are all strongly encouraged to check out the new forum and make a post if we have something to say.

Comment to Daniel & Noel: put reminder of forum in listserv emails.

- ** How could the forum be improved?

Send suggestions to Daniel (gsa@uga.edu) or Noel (gsasec@uga.edu)

- III. Health Insurance
 - A. Survey Update and mailing to BOR

80% were not in favor of mandatory health insurance. GSA has not been given any details about health plan. Daniel has pursued the question of whether or not mandating health insurance is legal. Daniel talked to an attorney today and she mentioned that UGA needs a specific purpose for the mandate. The only rationale found was to promote good health. Lynn Tabor at the Health Center wants to meet with Daniel and UGA administrators regularly about insurance. Daniel will send a letter this week with survey results and other comments received.

Comment: Daniel should stress to the administration that grad students are not just whining, but that we

were never included in discussions and that we have been kept in the dark through the whole process.

Question: What is GSA's position/goal with health insurance?

Answer: For a voluntary plan with a stipend. Also to be included in the decision making process.

Comment: Paying more for health insurance may actually detract from student health (can only afford a diet of ramen noodles). This plan may also force students to take out loans solely for health insurance.

Daniel: The current plan is to have insurance paid for in a large lump-sum at the beginning of the semester.

Question: Are undergraduates required to have health insurance?

Answer: No, but it will be soon.

Question: Is there any information on the benefits etc?

Answer: No. UGA has announced guidelines but they are not allowed to be disclosed. The range of cost is estimated to be \$1000 to \$1200 per year.

Daniel: Get in touch with the Board of Regents because they are the ones making the decisions, not Michael Adams or the Graduate School.

IV. Georgia Graduate Student Interdisciplinary Conference and GSA Social

A. March 31 and April 1, a schedule is available at www.uga.edu/gsa

Conference is free to everyone and please hand out flyers if you are comfortable doing so. The card has all the necessary info. It can be really cool to listen to a graduate student talk about their research that has nothing to do with your own. Lunch is free to presenters, \$10 everyone else. Social on Friday night, free to all. March 1 is the deadline for abstract submission. Everyone is encouraged to present in this casual, friendly atmosphere. At least come by to listen to talks.

B. Spread the word about the presentations and keynote speaker... it's FREE!!!

He writes Ph.D. Comics.

V. Continuous Enrollment Proposal

A. A request from GSA to Dean Grasso was made but we were not informed that the UGA Cabinet would be discussing the issue, UGA Cabinet approved the policy

B. GSA will now proceed through the UC Executive Committee

UC EC chair recommended to Daniel that we draft an amendment to the policy that will improve the policy that will reduce the financial burden to graduate students who have legitimate reasons for leaving campus for a period of time. The amendment should propose alternative means for keeping track of students. A draft of this amendment will be forwarded to GSA reps for comments soon for revisions before going to the Executive Committee.

Question: Do students actually have to register for academic classes or do research hours count?

Answer: Students will have to register for 3 hours, 2 out of every 3 semesters. These may be research hours. The current plan only allows for leave for health or financial burden, but there are many other reasons students may have, getting a job for example.

VI. Co-op childcare center being considered for graduate students

The on-campus childcare center is completely backlogged (waiting list several hundred long). Could we open up a coop childcare center? There seemed to be interest on the latest GSA survey. GSA is working with the vice chair of the Executive Committee on this issue.

VII. GSA 2006-2007 Budget

Daniel is working on budget now. He wants input and will send out the budget draft to the reps listserv to

get comments. He doesn't anticipate much change, but would like the process to be transparent so everyone has input.

Question: Is there money for students to go to conferences and professional development workshops.
Answer: We probably won't get much money because the grad school already has money set aside for that, as do many departments.

VIII. Election for GSA Pres and VP

A. Candidates to be announced at March meeting

According to the constitution we need to announce candidates at March meeting, but we don't have any candidates at this point so we should postpone the announcements until April. If you are interested in running, contact Daniel ASAP. Traditionally, GSA has a tough time getting people to run for president. If you want to know about the job talk to Daniel. It is an 18-hour assistantship (\$1400/month) and Daniel puts in 20 to 25 hours. We really need people to run. At this time you are required to run as a President/VP ticket, but Daniel is open to discussion on this. The VP is compensated with at \$2000 stipend (not an assistantship).

B. Vote needs to be postponed until April

IX. Tate 2 update

Daniel has been telling the committee to open website with a forum for people to post comments and suggestions on what offices, businesses, reading space etc. we want. We are paying for this new building and should have input. Email Willie Banks (willieb@uga.edu) with your suggestions or Daniel and he will take comments to the Tate 2 committee. Daniel will also send out a message to all graduate students asking for input.

X. Events

A. Next GSA meeting is Monday, March 20, 2006 (right after spring break)

B. GGSIC and GSA social March 31 and April 1

C. Habitat for Humanity with GAPS on Saturday, April 8, 2006

If interested email Todd (thawley@uga.edu).

Per the work of Daniel and Denise, starting this fall the campus bus map will be redesigned and easier to read (individual bus route maps) and all the covered bus stops will have these maps permanently posted.