

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

I. Welcome

A. Introductions

II. Discuss new suggestions for Representatives

A. Listserv

GSA reps should tell people about the GSA listserv, which is the best way to get information about GSA.

B. regular meeting with college/school Deans

- along with regular meetings between GSA officers and UGA Pres/Provost

Daniel feels the GSA president should meet regularly with the president rather than calling him in reaction to particular concerns – the relationship would be more positive that way. Daniel also feels that individual reps meeting regularly with the Deans of individual Schools & Colleges would be a good idea too.

C. Information initiative (regular flyers)

Denise has an idea to hand out regular flyers at regular intervals that just let people know that if they have questions to contact dept. reps, GSA president, come to GSA meetings etc. The ultimate goal is to increase participation in GSA.

Question – Should we have an email signup sheet/computer at the very popular socials to sign up for the GSA listserv? We can also send out a post social thank you for attending the social.

III. Health Insurance

A. Survey update, mailing to BOR

Directly after the last GSA meeting Daniel was told that the insurance provider was announced. This was much sooner than we were premium thus we didn't get survey out. All information on the new plan can be found at the GSA website which links to the health center website.

B. New decisions (subsidy, monthly payments, and UHC website info)

Pearce & Pearce has been chosen as provider for the entire University System. Premium = \$830. UGA '06-'07 Subsidy = \$350 and UGA will attempt a 40% subsidy for all subsequent years, but no guarantee. Restriction on P&P such that premium can't go up over 8% per year. International students who do not get the subsidy are actually worse off with the new health plan. Their coverage goes down, their premium is going up and they now have a deductible. Daniel will speak with the new USG Chancellor about this issue of international students.

Question – How will subsidy be distributed?

Answer – The subsidy will be issued as a reduced premium, although there will be some sort of “monthly” pay deduction from assistantship paychecks.

Question – Must you have the P&P plan to get subsidy?

Answer – Yes.

Question – Is it legal for UGA to require health insurance?

Answer – Daniel has spoken with several UGA law professors and a few practicing lawyers and none have said it is illegal, but none have it is legal. It seems ambiguous at this point. Although one attorney did mention that it may be illegal for the international students to be differently affected by this decision under the equal protections clause of the Constitution. Daniel will keep looking into this issue.

Comment – GSA should keep pushing the administration until the subsidy is 100%. If it's mandatory, it should be provided for free.

Reply – GSA surveys will help GSA go to the administration and let them know what students desire. Additionally, regular meetings with deans may help with this issue.

IV. Georgia Graduate Student Interdisciplinary Conference and GSA Social

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

Please hang up and hand out very appealing purple flyers for the conference. There are conference flyers, keynote speaker flyers and mini conference flyers. Take as many as you can. Hand out mini flyers in your classrooms. We really want to increase attendance at the talks. We have over 50 presenters and a full schedule with abstracts will be out later this week. We have presenters from many Georgia Universities and one presenter from out of state (UNC)! The conference is free for all.

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

Jorge Cham is a very popular speaker and has over 50 speaking engagements this year. Encourage all your friends to attend.

V. Continuous Enrollment Proposal

A. GSA submitted an alternative proposal to the Graduate Council

The Graduate Council is changing the name to Graduate Enrollment, Daniel will let us know what happens at the April meeting.

B. GSA will also proceed through the UC Executive Committee

Daniel will keep us up to date on the UC EC involvement in the policy.

VI. Co-op childcare center being considered for graduate students (meeting w/Provost)

A new childcare facility is being considered. Many of our peer and aspirational institutions have 2 or 3 childcare centers. UGA has only one with a very long waiting list.

VII. Parking issues – coordinating permit disbursement date and identification of departmental graduate assistants (during summer)

Parking services issues permits in June, which is before many departments announce who grad assistants are so many people don't get passes because GA's get priority. Daniel is pursuing a solution to this problem with the parking folks.

Question – Do students even know where they are going to be living in June to determine if they even need a pass?

Answer – it probably doesn't affect many people but for those who it does, it's a big deal.

VIII. GA workloads

A. UGA planning figure/ Graduate school figure

Daniel sees this as the next big issue GSA will address. There is no uniformity across campus regarding stipends and workloads. Thus each department has different stipends and differing workloads and these are different from the graduate school assistantships. An initiative to assess the variance in workload and pay across campus has been begun.

Comment – We should work with individual departments because there are limited departmental funds and requirements and workloads.

Reply – Craig Edlebrock, Grad School Associate Dean, seems to have the same concerns and is willing to work with GSA.

Comment – There is even variation within departments.

B. Different amounts by department

See above.

C. Need for more uniform requirements

See above.

D. Graduate School proposals for increased stipends

See above.

IX. Election for GSA Pres and VP

At the last meeting Daniel proposed having President and VP run separately rather than as a ticket.

President is an 18 hour assistantship = about \$18,000 stipend plus tuition.

Comment – Synergy is important so a ticket is a good idea.

Comment – It's not necessary, there could be a benefit from having a Pres and VP coming from different departments, which is most likely if a ticket is required.

Comment – If there is a ticket then the Presidential candidate has to find someone to be VP rather than having someone who is initially passionate about being VP.

Comment – Unlike SGA, GSA doesn't require any signatures to run. Any graduate or professional student can run regardless of previous experience or participation with GSA.

Vote to Allow candidates to run with out ticket.

- Candidates don't have to run by 11 to 2 vote.

A. Meet the candidates

Two presidential candidates are here.

Todd is for VP again, but encourages others to run too.

Lindsay Scott – Graduated from U. Kansas last year and now at UGA working on Masters in Journalism. Communication with many aspects of UGA admin is very important for GSA president and that's what she is studying. She wants more people involved with GSA as reps. Use website more: contact students before they get to campus, this happens at other schools; president should keep a blog.

Q: What are key issues for GSA/issues that you are most passionate about?

A: Health insurance

Q: Have you thought about how to increase GSA meeting attendance?

A: GSA pres speaking at departmental council meetings and departmental orientations.

Michael Boatwright – currently high school teacher working w/under represented students. Next year will be first year as full time Ph.D. student (currently part time). Michael wants to continue Daniel and Todd's initiatives from this year. Being a watchdog and getting the word out about GSA and its issues. Looking forward to working with GSA.

Q: What are key issues for GSA/issues that you are most passionate about?

A: Making stipends more equable and Health insurance. Also childcare

Q: How important is it to have relationships with other grad student organizations?

A: It is key.

Q: What is your approach to working with administration?

A: Being with the admin officials and meetings, keep up on student needs thought surveys.

B. Election will be held mid-April, an announcement will go out via the Graduate School and the GSA listserv to vote online

X. Events

A. Next GSA meeting is Monday, April 24, 2006
Elections will be held for President and VP.

B. GGSIC and GSA social March 31 and April 1
Schedule on website.
Hang up flyers and let Daniel know where you put them so he knows where flyers aren't.

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

GAPS Mary Francis Early lecture on April 4th at 7pm at the Chapel by Michael Eric Dyson, Prof at Penn. Dr. Dyson is known as "Hip Hop Intellectual" exploring the voice that Hip Hop has offered today's youth. Keep an eye out for more info.

Next survey will be conducted through the GSA forum.