

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA.

GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT COUNCIL



Meeting Minutes Wednesday, 22 October 2003

- I. Meeting called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Brittney Williams
- II. **Present:** Rachael Neal, Christian Lander, Melissa Maes Erika Geiger, Shannon Vaffis, Karen Sweazea, Ken Cardell, Felipe Ip, Mark Zubriski, Jason Johnson, Amanda Brobbel, Brittney Williams, Veronica Diaz, Benjamin Tong James Eddy, Maricela Meza, Jim Collins, Kyle Baughman Proxy: Amrita Chugh, Roberto Flores, Thomas Kinney
- III. Calls to the audience – no response.
- IV. Reading and approval of minutes at next meeting.
- V. Officer Reports:
 - A. President – Jani Radebaugh – out of town.
 - B. External Vice President – Veronica Diaz – no report at the moment
 - C. Internal Vice President – Brittney Williams – will discuss under Showcase items later.
 - D. Treasurer – Amanda Brobbel – no budget report at the moment.
- VI. Representative and director reports – none.
- VII. New Business
 - A. Showcase – Williams reports that volunteers are needed to help out on the 7th and 8th of November and passes around a sign-up sheet. Williams also reports that there are currently 28 applicants for Showcase, but that we need more, therefore the date for submission has been extended to November 3. Almost every current entrant would now be eligible to go to Phoenix and win more prize money. Williams requests that GPSC representatives take flyers and post them in as many places as possible. Representative asks if there is any funding available to subsidize the creation of posters. Brobbel and other officers indicated that this is not in the budget for Showcase. Williams also requested that GPSC reps. contact Professors to judge the event – need Profs from various disciplines. Representative expresses that there was some confusion over the distribution of prize money on the flyers. Williams confirms that the \$10, 000 total is split up. Williams ended the discussion with a renewed call for volunteers and indicated that free pizza will be available to those who participate.
 - B. T-Shirts – Geiger reported that the T-shirts are on the way – they will be ready by homecoming.

- C. Grad Council Meeting – Brobbel reported that the Grad Council just approved a plan to permit the creation of 3/2 Programs in departments and colleges who would like to encourage high-achieving undergrads to stay through the Masters level at the University of Arizona. The general idea is that top students should be allowed to earn both an undergraduate and graduate (masters level) degree in 5 years. Diane Horgan presented and proposed this change to the Graduate College because some of these programs currently exist at UA and she felt that Graduate College policy needed to catch up both to these developments and the national popularity of such programs. The proposal indicates that highly motivated undergrads enrolled in such a program would be able to take a maximum of 18 credit hours of graduate credit as undergraduates, which would then also count toward their graduate level degree. Currently 6 credits of undergraduate coursework may be counted for a graduate degree. 12 graduate credits would then be additionally allowed to count for both degrees to bring the total to 18 credits counting for both. While Brobbel, as proxy for Thomas Kinney, did not vote in favor of this proposal - due to comments from Council members that indicated that such programs have reduced the quality of other graduate programs - there was only one abstention and the rest of the Council voted to approve. Brobbel commented that this policy might be particularly beneficial for Non-traditional students, but thinks that GPSC should still think about how we would like to respond.

Brobbel finished her report on the Grad Council meeting by asking GPSC what they thought of Dr. Hixon's query to council members concerning collapsing the categories of GTA and GRA into one category: GA (graduate assistant), which he felt would provide greater flexibility both to GTAs and GRAs. Brobbel commented that it might provide more equality between GTAs and GRAs in terms of tuition remission in the future, but wasn't certain as to how flexible this might make workloads. Representatives asked questions about how this might affect those GRAs who are paid through grant money and what kind of timeline Hixon was proposing. Brobbel did not have answers since Hixon's query was simply formulated as a "what if" without any data or background to indicate the ramifications.

Reps then began to ask questions about the 3/2 proposal; whether the students enrolled in such programs would be paying undergraduate or graduate tuition, which Brobbel could not answer (the proposal does indicate that once an undergraduate student has completed the undergraduate requirements, "they would be automatically converted to 'regular' graduate status"). Another question was asked about whether this would change admissions – specifically will this take spots from graduate students from outside UA? A few reps indicated that there shouldn't be different requirements for grads from outside and the 3/2 population – if GREs are required for incoming grads, then they should be required for the 3/2 group. Another rep indicated that we should find statistics on how many undergrads currently stay to complete grad programs. Another rep commented on the similarity between the 3/2 program and the AP program, with high-scoring students being able to skip over many basic requirements and register at the sophomore level, except that those credits are not applied to the major. Diaz pointed out that the AP program has nationwide standards, while these 3/2 programs do not. Felipe Ip suggested that GPSC have the Academic Affairs Committee investigate this matter. It was determined that the matter would be discussed again.

- D. Comments on Shared Governance – Diaz reports that some of the issues raised by the Graduate Council report were of concern to the rules on shared governance, since much of

what goes through these committees does not go through Faculty Senate. The hiring and firing that went on last spring and over the summer did not follow the rules on Shared Governance, but it was done this way for the sake of expediency - UA Administrators needed to show ABOR that they were and are working toward Focused Excellence. Since GPSC members sit on the Graduate Committee on Curriculum and other committees, and vote on issues that are relevant to graduate student issues, we have the power to stop or shape some of these decisions.

- E. Academic Visa Reform Petition & the Wildcat – Williams reported that Radebaugh has spoken with Wildcat staff about the misrepresentation of the last meeting reported in the student paper. She has been assured that the relationship has improved and that we should not experience further problems. The Grad College has responded to the changes to the International Student Visas by hiring a person who will deal solely with that issue. Regarding the revision of the petition, Diaz indicated that the two primary concerns are about illegal immigrants being lumped in with International Students and the fact that the petition focuses on Chinese scholars – GPSC is working on revising this for a broader focus. There are many students who were here on scholarly Visas before who still have not been allowed back into the country. Jim Collins pointed out that we should contact the library about their policy of only allowing 12 renewals of books for graduate students, a policy that most graduate students are not aware of. After the 12th renewal, graduate students must bring all the books back to the library and renew them in person or else be fined. Jim’s concern is that this might place International Graduate students at a serious disadvantage if they are not able to get back into the country. Jim asserts that GPSC should contact the library about instituting a waiver system for students held up outside of the country. We will continue to discuss the issue at the next meeting.
- F. Felipe Ip requested that he be voted in as an At Large Representative. This was unanimously approved by all GPSC representatives who were present.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 6:45.

Respectfully submitted by Amanda Brobbel