

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday September 10, 2008

I. Meeting called to order at 6:08 pm by Bridget Barker

Present: Stephen Bieda, Randy Vazquez, Bridget Barker, Emily Connally, Boris Glebov, Jed Laver, Stephanie Levitt, Robert Jacobi, Erica Cirillo-McCarthy, David Lopez-Negrete, David Talenfeld, Helena Morrison, James Johnson, A. Quadir Khan, Kunal Ramani, Tim Chambers, Jim Collins, Alison Betts, Tiffany Goforth, Lauren Sekora, Roeland Hancock, Sandra Nameth, Tucker Peck

Proxies: Sanket Unhale, Chizanya Mpinja, Alison Betts

II. Calls to the audience – Ryan Paul and Stephanie Mertz, English Graduate Union (EGU)

Approaching the council to inform of vulnerability to cuts, specifically budget cuts, and how they may affect graduate students. UA writing program offers classes, currently class caps at 26, comparable institutions, such as ASU cap at 19. National Council of Teachers of English recommend no more than 20 students per class, ideally 15. Students are teaching more than recommended limits for number of students, and this translates to more work for same amount of money. The overload affects research and undergraduate educational quality. As this is an issue faced by all colleges, not only in the English Department, the EGU would like to work together with other grads through the GPSC to address this issue. President and Provost are talking about restructuring, the EGU would like to remind us to make sure that graduate teaching loads stay as small as possible to increase quality for students. Currently, how do we stack up to peer institutions? Some have fewer than half the load we do. The restructuring could potentially make this much worse.

The EGU will be going to public meetings and having voices heard from administration. They would like support from GPSC in attending and also in making this issue a priority in our other communications with administration. The floor was opened for questions.

Q: Boris Glebov: What is the standard load for teaching?

A: Two sessions each semester. Peer institutions have one session one time a year. Averaging 52 students per grad student in developmental English classes.

Q: Tim Chambers: How many hours per week does one section require?

A: We don't know the hours per week. Per semester the average is over 230 hours. One student adds at least 5 hours per semester. Clarification by Alison Betts: In 63% of Humanities majors, much of what we do is not related to our own work in research. The research and teaching are completely separate. One section can generate thousands of pages of non research related reading and work.

Q: David Lopez-Negrete: Have undergraduate students complained of diminishing quality?

A: We are not aware of complaints, the increase in number of students just went into effect over the summer and its impact is difficult to estimate because students are required, need to get through these classes so sometimes will just be added and don't understand the impact of the additional work on their own experience. We as a unit are trying to educate them about the decrease in value of each degree in response to higher courseloads for instructors. National studies report smaller number of students (15) improves success in classroom. Smaller classes mean students pass, they are retained in University and they stay in class and give better evaluations, though these stats are national, not about UA.

Clarification by Alison Betts: For many of these students, the course is part of their first experience in University so they do not have much to compare experience to in order to voice complaint. Overall, more than 50% of entire university TAs work more than 20 hours per week.

III. Guest Speakers –

a. Library representatives: Dean Stoffle and guests. The library staff has met with leaders of GPSC about increasing fees, and now wants to present to the broader meeting with general council. The GPSC received the fee report and report to provost about library affairs. Currently moving to becoming more of an electronic library, we can expect to buy more digital books and journals. Hopefully this transition means convenient and ready access for students. Some notable resources include digital delivery of print articles, desktop delivery of interlibrary loans, and paging from collections so that you can come in and pick up books at reserve area. The library has added study carrels, such that only 10 students are on a waiting list instead of 50-60.

What the budget cut means to you: we tried to protect staff at desks, try to protect instruction at all levels. Budget has been flat, but has been protected thus far. Inflation in material costs is 6-8% a year, that rate is higher than any other entity on campus. Even if budget stays same, costs increase dramatically. The library has increased attempts to streamline: no more binding, improved interlibrary loan. Last year we took a cut of \$850,000 in purchases, mostly books and journals. Using student fee and gift money, we invested between 1-1.5 million in the budget per year to keep inflation gap tighter. The gap is too large to sustain in this way.

The deans office will begin putting together lists of potential serious cuts along with items taken to consult with faculty for suggested cuts. In 2009-2010 will make \$1.2 million in cuts. This year the plan is just working on the process preparing for Fall 2009 cut. Impact already is that we dropped from buying 60,000 volumes per year, to 36,000, then to 30,000, now 20,000 print. We anticipate dramatic drops: make all attempts to minimize that and consult with campus. Committed ourselves not to use student fee money for budget cuts, but for investments in electronic materials.

Would like to show you our wishlist of electronic items we need to invest in, some with ongoing costs. We haven't been investing in things with ongoing costs, but now we need to make money available for ongoing costs because we don't have the money to buy them outright. Ideally would cut paging of documents and replace with delivery. Online collections is an important investment. We need \$700,000 in ongoing costs to boost our electronic system. Health Sciences now part of online catalog, working with poetry to bring online as well. Other collections, state museum, arts, video library are in the plan. We are also currently looking for navigators that allow us to search across country and locally.

We are presenting to the GPSC because we want to know your willingness to help raise this money. We are working on proposal, would like a student advisory group to research services team, to see what graduate students and researchers need. This is just beginning of discussion with you, we understand that fees are tough, if we had another way to do it we wouldn't be initiating conversation. Want feedback and to initiate discussion about raising fees.

Q: Helena Morrison: Health Science Center library receives own budget, so is this discussion just for main library budget? Do you discuss with them to make sure no duplication of services?

A: Yes and no. What happens is student fee taken from health sciences students, we take all fees and return student fee to that department for that proportion of students. If we increase fee, they will get proportion as would law library. We provide most of the basic science materials, they mostly purchase clinical and brain research journals, very specialized. We do coordinate and the services that we provide, we provide to health sciences students as well.

Q: Tucker Peck: Does this budget account for philanthropy? What about donors?

A: Some outside of budget activities have been helping to close the gap, between donors, student fee and other funds we develop, like owning part of bookends cafe. We put in 1-1.5 million dollars into budget last year, but this is one time money, once spent needs to be earned again.

Q: Boris: On wish list, you have 3 newspapers. How much do you have on microfilm. What will you do with microfilm?

A: Will give it away. When print are replaced with electronic, microfilm is sent to research center where they bind and save and store the materials.

Q: Robert: When you say you split fees, with rest of money you buy centralized services, so in a way students are paying for services for other students. Would it make more sense to put it under one big budget?

A: All students are benefitting. What happens is that some materials we take from health sciences. Videos, they don't stream, so people request them from us, we go borrow them and digitize them. After this process we get access to collections. Some people would say yes it makes sense to combine, but some say no. Association that accredits law schools requires a separate law library. For example the dean of the law library reports to dean of law school not dean of libraries, primarily for political and accreditation reasons. Overall, though, we try to act as a whole unit.

Q: James Johnson: On the wish list is novel sci tec library. Seems like many departments have access to these journals. Is the wish list item to replace the system or in addition to it?

A: May be some faculty or labs that have access, but most of campus does not. This would be campus wide access and movement, not limited to department. Would hope that departments could save money and do other things with it, so campus wide access could save departmental funds.

Q: Jed Laver: Once upon a time there was an idea for Northern library, is that still in discussion?

A: Yes it is still in discussion. KUAT needs space, put separate library is on hold to see if we could put both entities within same building as they have have similar needs and same emergency backup plan. Students need facility and information commons, need graduate carrels need music, dance, arts, etc together. The plan is still on middle priority list, hope to bump it up by working KUAT.

Today was just about opening conversation, we have no intention in going for student fee increase this year, want feedback on it. Would appreciate feedback, and we will be back to get names for advisory groups.

IV. Swearing in of new Representatives.

V. Officer Reports:

President – Stephen Bieda – (1) Budget cuts have been main focus of Faculty Senate. Deans council beginning meetings to restructure various campus entities. College advisory councils are forming to advise deans on these cuts. Expect 5-10% cuts, business as usual cannot continue. Major budget cut proposal, Provost Hay has said she would like to see as much as a 50% cut. An example from college of science: the plan on the table would reduce number of units from 13 to 4, combining into 4 schools. Large task ahead of us, using as many resources as possible to lobby legislature, administration. Strongly encourage us all to begin talking to deans. Some colleges do not have advisory council. First white papers 9/23 to 10/1 Final formal report is due 10/13. Deans have been asked to form task forces to begin looking at this issue. Boris is bringing up SPBAC side, looking at all proposals. Any recommendations and concerns will be sent through Boris. Another big issues: deans should not tell anyone that department and units are cut without input from faculty and students. Open letter to campus being sent from provost. Look for that for more information. (2) 44% of university budget is paid through faculty salaries. Once positions are open will likely not be filled. Cost studies are underway to determine effects. Gen ed and undergrad services will be adjusted as well as soon as possible. Now that everyone is aware of issue, we must work as effectively as possible. Thursday 9/11 precise steps should be given to all academic units. Near term milestones: deans, provost, associate VP begin meeting on 9/17. On Tuesday 9/16 Bridget and Stephen will be talking to advisors to the governor. By 9/23 transition teams will begin work, expected to send final white papers by 10/13. Not from departments, from broad areas such as liberal arts. For mergers to happen, 75% of in unit faculty must agree or faculty senate will make decision. 3 GPSC representatives serve, currently two from ASUA, need to have 4. Clarification by Emily Connally: We have been given a list of prioritization guidelines to try to follow. Encourage constituents to phrase program strengths and weaknesses along these lines. Clarification by David Talenfeld: the new plan is like focused excellence on steroids, it is going to happen and now it is a question of damage control, must talk to administrators and see how they are advocating. (3) Tuition: ABOR 2009-2010 have raised budget from 3% cost of living to 13.1% equivalent.

Q: Robert Jacobi: Is this hike just tuition or other funds?

A: Stephen Bieda: Recommended to tuition, undergrad and graduate.

Q: Jim Collins: What are the odds that we're going to make any difference?

A: Stephen Bieda: Asked that to faculty chair, strongly emphasized where student input is going, it is up to us to go in and talk to deans and department heads. Trying to set up meetings with faculty and grad students on such as short times scale is too difficulty, convey your thoughts directly to faculty and dean.

Q: Helena Morrison: If you don't know what the options are, I don't know whether my constituents have much to say. Is there a model we are trying to base this on? Do we just say we don't want it? How, specifically, do we get our voices heard in college of nursing, we don't have a dean? What do we do? I don't want to raise this issue and make people feel powerless.

A: Stephen Bieda: Talk to constituents, rank where you are, what your priorities are, and what cannot be cut.

Clarification Q: Boris Glebov: Do you have interim Dean? Go talk to him. ASU went through major cut, fairly detailed summaries are online, and we will likely do the same. If all of us have no idea what to do, whatever input we put in will definitely affect president. He simply doesn't have any guidelines without it.

Q: Robert Jacobi: We were informed recently in last senate committee about a paper, certain timelines for restructuring that cannot be undercut, are they still in line or are these just being ignored?

A: Stephen Bieda: Our input is vital, we can find a way to get information into deans, thought this process is considered fast by university terms, want recommendations by a given date and SPBAC and faculty senate will have input. If not able to get there quickly enough, we will try our best at later timepoints.

Q:David Talenfeld: I think somebody mentioned something about panicking constituents,. It is important not to cause panic by focusing on increasing tuition and departmental cuts. The important thing is to focus on channeling energy and showing a force. student solidarity.

Q:James Johnson: One thing haven't heard is cutting enrollment itself. We seem to be growing. How much does one student cost versus how much they will bring in?

A: Stephen Bieda: Actually, the administration's logic is the opposite they want to increase number of students. 13% tuition increase would help avert much of the budget crisis. Ultimately we are down to faculty and department heads panicking. Provost hay made it clear she is willing to consider anything and everything. SPBAC should research to see how much a student does actually cost.

Q: Boris Glebov: The University of Arizona is increasing their efforts to recruit from california, but otherwise has mostly been moaning and not doing anything. Faculty responded that the president should show initiative in this process, as well.

Q: Alison Betts; In any conversations, who is pointing out the contradictions, we want to be world class but are cutting resources?

A: Stephen Bieda: We all agree it is a huge contradiction.

Lauren Sekora commented that even in nonacademic units, we already see things happening, such as losing employees, outside of academics, other units are being cut now.

Q: David Talenfeld: What is ASA doing in terms of lobbying?

A: Stephen Bieda: Doing absolutely nothing right now. We have encouraged unification with ASA on the issue, but as of right now they only focus on tuition.

A: Boris Glebov: we've floated idea of lobbying unifying other campuses graduate students as well. We have started encouraging graduate and professional sides of NAU and ASU to lobby.

A: David Talenfeld: Let's get on the agenda. If we all got on a bus and showed up, they could not ignore us.

A: Bridget Barker: Through all of this it is important to remember that students do have a voice, though we may feel helpless. We represent all of the colleges on campus, and ASUA cannot claim the same, so we do have potential to have powerful voice.

Q: Jed Laver: What about faculty that leave naturally, better job offers? None have been replaced, which means teaching loads have gone up from 12 to 16, if we have 17 my college will lose accreditation and is no longer a professional school.

A: Stephen Bieda: This point is an important one to add to white papers. Keep your eyes on the listserv for more details about this, and email us with questions or comments.

Alison Betts made a motion to add time to meetings or to increase frequency to keep up with the current situation. Jed Laver offered a friendly amendment to increase the time per meeting. Robert Jacobi offered an amendment to increase the frequency of general council meetings, Stephen Bieda called the motion to question. Alison Betts accepted Robert Jacobi's amendment as friendly. The motion passed with no abstentions. We will have more frequent meetings, one per week. Boris Glebov reminded everyone that we can also have discussions on listserv, reply to GPSC-L to speed things up. Jim Collins will send an e-mail to the other list to let everyone who is not on the non GPSC-L lists know about other options for discussions in a more private forum.

Q: Jim Collins: Can we get a list of who is on the GPSC-L list, then we know who we're talking to?

A: Stephen Bieda will send this list out to all.

Vice President – *Boris Glebov* – none

Assembly Chairperson – *Bridget Barker* - Met with ICPC to make decisions about whether department of Journalism can become a School of Journalism. Approved calendar for 2011 and 2012. Also discussed improving general education standards and whether courses from community college could assist in that process or should transfer. The military leave of absence has been approved. We also discussed a new set of standardized class standings: credits of 30, 60, 90 for each respective year should help many clarify standards for undergraduates.

Treasurer – *Randy Vazquez* – Confirmed \$15,000 contribution from Grad College. Now need to confirm residency life donation. Please convey message that we pay \$30 ASUA fee for graduate student clubs. I will be meeting tomorrow to see how to pay graduate club fee or possibly have it waived. Try to avoid having to reimburse people. Please send out on list serve that graduate student club fees now paid by GPSC.

Secretary – *Emily Connolly*– Speed Dating was a success. We have some upcoming events, like a wine tasting at 10/11 at Vila's Thai Cuisine. This is David Talenfeld's project. David Talenfeld: Vila's has

been voted Tucson's 7th best dining experience. We will have live music, local art, food, wine, beer and mixed drinks available, from all over campus, hope you will help me spread the word. 8-10 pm Saturday October 11th.

VI. Representative and Director Reports:

a. A. Quadir Khan - report for Chizanya, who is not here. Chizanya attended the Diversity Coalition meeting on 9/3. Discussion regarding the perceived lack of attention given to diversity in the university's strategic plan was tabled when President Shelton and Dr/ Wand Howell arrived at the meeting. They were there to discuss upcoming changes that will result in mergers, "coalescences" and programs being cut. Members of the Diversity Coalition expressed concern that certain programs, specifically those relating to ethnic studies could be most at risk, hampering diversity efforts. President Shelton and Dr. Howell stressed that the decisions will be the result of a collaborative process and that several town hall meetings will be held to keep both faculty and students informed.

b. Alison Betts: Last month, child care RFP committee met, it is interested in establishing childcare on campus came and heard about issues and opportunities. Both companies with RFPs responded. Will meet later this month to discuss and evaluate our two options, which possibly both have experience working with diverse student and faculty populations. Overall the situations looks promising.

c. Tim Chambers: Met with student union advisory council, not much happened. interested in what graduate students want added to the union. Much ignorance about what is already available, we should be getting word out about union and they would like to be getting information from us about what would be useful. Please pass ideas through me.

VII. Reading and approval of August 27th Meeting minutes – Robert Jacobi moved to approve the minutes with typos corrected. Alison Betts seconded the motion, which passed with two abstentions.

VIII. Old Business

a. **GO Report** – Bridget Barker – At GO we asked to evaluate Socials: what do you want to get out of socials? Most ranked some but not all 4. Networking/ meeting others: providing an environment in our socials for people to meet others. opens new collaborations, etc. A few people think that volunteer and service work should be part of GPSC socials. We wanted to know which would events people would attend, and they said everything, including movie night which has not been successful in the past.

Comment by James Johnson, we should remember we are talking to first years who may not know what they want or have time for yet. Tucker Peck added that he has been a professional trivia organizer and he thinks people would be interested in trivia night. Emily Connally suggested Tucker Peck be part of the social committee. Stephen Bieda announced that all new members will have committees to be on and should let him know what internal committee is best. David Talenfeld commented that people express more interest than we are seeing in turn out at events. We could do more to promote the events and are trying. A Facebook group will be made, and we can use this to invite people to all events.

Bridget Barker is holding weekly meetings with office staff to improve outreach: ways to get the word out. Listserv: GPSC-A: want to have a way on the main page to have listserv sign up for direct emails about socials, events, grant deadlines. We don't think coordinators always send information out in a timely fashion.

Robert Jacobi reminded everyone to send announcements to people in your college, If you don't see it coming around in your department from coordinators and you know it went to GPSC-L, at least send it around.

Alison Betts: On these surveys we had a lot of interest in facebook. Getting direct contact with individual students is very important. Suggestions of other things, as well, may need to spread word about services available, such as hiking.

Q: Robert Jacobi: I did an incoming survey at my last university so I can contribute it to the cause.

b. Bill of Rights – Boris Glebov– Emily Connally moved to table this discussion for a future date. Boris Glebov seconded the motion and it passed with no abstentions.

c. Library fee discussion – Bridget Barker –This discussion started last time. We did have a fairly lengthy discussion already. Point of clarification: this is not a fee yet, the library is getting input. The table is open for discussion.

Tim Chambers commented that a library fee seems a worthwhile expenditure, it is an annoyance but will provide a useful result. James Johnson observed that seems like the entire university is running damage control, and increasing budget seems very unlikely, so asking for more money seems a bit odd. Alison Betts commented that the library is one of the more forward thinking programs on campus in terms of research, services. We can question some of what they want, but what they are attempting to do is very beneficial for graduate students. Boris Glebov added that of all the fees it is the only one he supports. The fee itself, compared to tuition hike, will be nothing, can get really obscure articles in a day. The library is one of the departments that will manage the money well. We should approve it.

Helena Morrison: In our library, our hours decreased this year, and cut availability of entering the library. I am concerned as to how much the fee will be useful. Despite the fact that they have cut services, health sciences has been closed. Ultimately I am concerned for my constituents, most of whom are not here, if we cannot enter the building, resources that are not electronic are useless. I don't know how to vote.

Bridget Barker: This is a conversation we will continue to have and will add people to committees to keep apprised of the situation.

Q: Erica Cirillo-McCarthy: It sounds like they just want feedback, should we go to our constituents or maybe we could have a discussion on the list serve about what we use and what we need more of?

Q: Robert Jacobi: Perhaps we could say something like, if the fee goes to something practical and not fancy stuff, if it goes to basic services, then we can keep it?

A: Alison Betts: In response to the comment about fancy stuff: cutting edge research happens here, do we keep what we have and let that go? We need to be forward thinking if we are going to be a research university.

d. Reading and approval of CSW proposal letter of support - Emily Connally, Alison Betts, Stephanie Levitt -

Q: Tucker Peck: what is the difference between this and what law allows? Is it similar to policy that would be the same if we were employees?

A: Alison Betts: Nothing is allowed by law, which applies only for full time employees. This plan only gives 6 weeks, but is paid leave without having to forfeit student status.

Emily Connally moved to approve this draft to be sent to CSW and taken to the graduate council. Alison Betts seconded and the motion passed with no abstentions.

IX. New Business

a. **POD and Club funding**– Randy Vazquez –We denied funding for a POD event bringing in a critic. Application was vague, dates did not match up, and included organizations that are “sponsoring” events. Some such sponsorship was not confirmed. Politically charged as well, specific interests. Budget was for \$1000, and asked for all from GPSC. For these reasons the application was denied.

Q: Boris Glebov: is there academic value in this event?

A: Randy Vazquez: It seemed to be more entertainment. Jed Laver attempted to use google to gain more information, nothing indicated it was more than talk about a recent book.

Boris Glebov moved to approve the recommendations of the appropriations committee. Emily Connally seconded the motion, which passed with no abstentions.

b. **Class size** – Bridget Barker – Stephen Bieda believes this is directly connected to budget cut issues. The overload already seen in EGU will be consequence of current recommendations for sweeping reductions in services. Boris Glebov I think the situation is probably grounds for negotiating, assuming administration is cutting staff, we should be able to ask for some of that money to go to teaching.

Clarification by Alison Betts: A lot of money comes from slush fund, which is floating depending on where the students will be. making some of those lines permanent, those funds permanent, could potentially help. Temporary funds for TA ships that float.

Q: Tim Chambers: is the student/ grad student discrepancy so large such that you need other grad students to fill it? do you have any issues with running out of students to fund in EGU?

A: We fill with adjunct professors. SLAT picks up some, only so many students can be supported by the department.

Erica Cirillo-McCarthy: if we increase TA lines, we don't have enough faculty to serve on committees, but I think the EGU is looking for our support as we go to councils writing white papers.

Erica Cirillo-McCarthy moved to draft a letter of support for English Graduate Union. Robert Jacobi seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

A discussion on how to best get our voices heard ensued:

Alison Betts: Obviously this is a larger problem than the English department, we need to work with what we have. If we do not make a point to complain now, it will be taken as a sign

Jim Collins: Point of information. Several years ago we had similar issues, and we protested. Why not do that now?

Boris Glebov: I am a fan of walking out, but we need some sort of action plan instead of simply walking. We need an alternative, Making a stink is fine, but we can't just say a situation is terrible, we're in trouble. At this point we are not offering a solution and will need a drastic action to call attention to our position.

Bridget Barker: if we have an active voice and talk to our deans and get our concerns in our white papers, but later it comes to a point that we are not being listened to we can take more drastic action.

Robert Jacobi: We should all talk to faculty first because they see the importance, make sure to communicate with them, need to make sure we coincide, and then go to the deans.

Tim Chambers: A point of historical reference: at UMich 5 years ago similar problem with lecturers, cuts job security, etc. The lecturers did a strike it was halfway successful, university asked what to do but it didn't work, but faculty were not willing to budge on needs and wants. If we come with a very clear plan of action we will give confidence that we are demonstrating for a particular purpose.

Roeland Hancock: In some departments such as linguistics faculty provide voluntary cuts to ensure that graduate students get paid

- c. Student Showcase - Bridget Barker - Encourage your students to put in applications for showcase. We give good prizes and a free lunch!

X. Motion to Adjourn – at 8:19 pm Kunal Ramani moved to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Stephen Bieda and carried unanimously.