

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA[®]

GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT COUNCIL

General Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 16, 2009
Law 168

I. Meeting called to order at 6:35 pm by J. Johnson

Members Present: D. Talenfeld, D. Lopez-Negrete, J. Johnson, C. Christenson, B. Korth, M. Moreno, L. Sekora, B. Verdugo Gonzalez, N. Kubota, L. Blaney, P. Sundareshan, N. Patel, A. Schumacher, N. Papaleo, M. Thomas, J. Collins

Proxies: H. Morrison (J. Johnson)

Guests Present: Clifton Harris (ASUA), Sarah Bratt (ASUA), Alejandrina Barajas

II. Call to Audience

A. Schumacher - new College of Medicine rep, Danielle Summers, introduced to council. Will be officially sworn in at next meeting.

III. Officer Reports

a. President - David Talenfeld

Office manager position - have distributed information to council and looking to distribute to campus. Looking to fill the vacancy as quickly but efficiently as possible.

Meeting with Student Affairs - met and discussed logistics and finalizing move

Looking for input about how to help - speakers this semester discussing health insurance, newly instituted tech fee, student affairs

b. Vice President - David Lopez-Negrete

SPBAC - Deans from departments explaining structure and addressing how implementing cuts to departments/colleges, last meeting was deans of Op Sci and Eller. Each department/college addresses their respective college, if representatives interested, contact deans to know what is occurring.

Committee of Eleven - Faculty forum discussing UA Defender blog and vote of no confidence in President Shelton/Provost Hay in addition to differential cuts. On September 9th, President Shelton explained rationale via email, which has been distributed to council. Also discussed tension between revenue generating units vs. teaching units, in end cuts go back to deans and how they deal with them.

Az Student Regent - Deadline to turn in applications is mid-October, looking to get graduate student on student regent, UA student regent 2 year position, will get voting rights in second year, 2011 when ABOR representation is going to be vital.

c. Assembly Chair - James Johnson

Open council vacancies - CALA has been added to the list. Logistics of filling vacancies will be forthcoming.

Office manager position has been distributed to list-serv, will go campus wide shortly. May need extra people to help in review process, more information to come. Hiring target date of mid-October.

d. Treasurer - Cory Christensen

Budget approved at previous meeting has been uploaded to website in efforts of transparency and openness.

J. Gerlach wants to remind people of Student Showcase, deadline is early October

College of Science - Science Salon - Food and discussion at Auld Dubliner, general science talks of varying topics - Open to all, graduate / undergraduate students, first one on 2009.09.17

e. Secretary - Bryan Korth

ASA board meeting 2009.09.11 with next on 2009.09.23. Discussed many topics, primarily SAFRA (Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act, H.R. 3221). National legislation focused on making college more affordable, will generate almost \$100 B in savings over next 10 years and create more effective student aid programs, look to increase Pell grant scholarships, keep interest rates low and fixed on Stafford Loans, improve Perkins loans, and more. Sat in on a national conference call on 2009.09.15 with bill authors, G. Miller (D-CA), T. Bishop (D-NY), U.S. secretary of Education Arne Duncan - "Need to increase college graduates not just college goers" this legislation will help financially.

Timeline - Bill on house floor within next few days and through to Senate within a week of going to house floor. Will likely bounce around a little after that but imperative that passes through house by **2009.10.15**, as this is when FFEL (Federal Family Education Loan, subsidy program for banks/other lenders) will be terminated (already in poor shape) and if passed, SAFRA will transfer all student lending into Direct Loan program. Termination of FFEL and transfer of lending to Direct Loan (Loans based on Federal Treasury dollars) will generate the savings of \$87 B, \$10 B will be returned to government to help with deficit while remaining reinvested into education. Program will cost tax payers no additional money because moneys coming from disbandment of FFEL. Can help by contacting representatives and senators, increasing awareness, ASA "debt bricks". More events to come, will send along information.

ASA also forming a graduate affairs workgroup/council to help bring G/P concerns to ASA. Meetings will begin in next few weeks, so concerns should be brought to council and B. Korth (bkorth@email.arizona.edu)

ASA supporting investigation into "Adequate Funding of Arizona's Public Universities" - push from ASU directors to look into logistics of getting citizens initiative on ballot in 2010 to find permanent revenue source of Arizona universities, because SOP is not working. Currently being looked at, will have more information from next board meeting.

IV. Representative and Director Reports

P. Sundareshan - Faculty Senate meeting - Discussion focused on differential cuts concern, the switch over of HR payment system and "Academic Freedom" discussion. A resolution was passed, "Senate will express concern about handguns on campus in locked vehicles.

L. Blaney - Bringing to council concern about lack of agenda for council for year. Feels that lack of urgent pressing issues on agenda leading to lack of attendance. There are major issues with tuition, concerns over health coverage cutting, and teaching loads among others. Also the lack of EB individuals in teaching positions may be resulting in disconnect with some issues. By the second meeting, priorities of the council should be set. In addition, general concern over D. Talenfeld statement "about GPSC has lack of power on campus"

A. Schumacher - Echoes the concerns of L. Blaney. What are the possibilities of placing members of council on committees that have decision making power if GPSC currently lacking power.

D. Talenfeld - Suggestion to convene policy committee to determine priority list and what is important. Personally, doesn't want to convey that not interested, but need individuals to take lead, need help from the rest of council.

L. Blaney - Wants EB to take lead, wants president to take lead in setting priorities. In addition, need to get ASUA involved as well, need to have more cooperation. If can't get word out to others, need to determine alternative actions, how to reach out to constituents.

J. Collins - Question how to get more power, how to get administration to listen. If can't figure out, may be able look to nation associations and other graduate student organizations for direction.

A. Schumacher - Feel that council needs to give president some leeway with current climate and situation. Part of council's responsibility is to bring concerns and issues to GPSC president and EB so that these issues can be brought to university and administration.

D. Lopez Negrete - L. Blaney points are well taken but issues plaguing council are also effecting university. Agrees with A. Schumacher that need input from more individuals for EB and council to be effective.

N. Papaleo - Why is council not discussing issues of walkout, issues of budget and cuts. Why is the council not discussing the meeting in defense of higher education on 2009.09.18? Why not focus on what we can do as graduate students, demonstration/walk out etc.

L. Blaney - Also should address division occurring between "revenue generating" and "teaching" colleges. When looking at numbers, humanities and SBS "pay their way" compared to revenue generating, where in some cases revenue generating colleges can be more costly.

J. Collins - University of Arizona is a public university not private institution, must keep that in mind.

B. Verdugo Gonzalez - Revenue generating colleges generate support with grants, collaborations with private institutions and funding.

J. Johnson - Must keep in mind that faculty and GS do not get paid for writing grants, money from these grants are often designated to very specific things, not free money.

L. Blaney - Previous discussion highlights concern of SBS/Humanities vs. science debate. Not productive to debate over who is valid to receive money based upon who generates money. Same issue that is occurring on campus, occurring here, being pitted against each other versus uniting.

A. Schumacher - motion to move concern of L. Blaney to policy committee for discussion and development of a plan of priorities and action, second N. Kubota. motion passes with no abstention.

V. Questions for Officer, Representative and Director Reports

None

VI. Reading and Approval of Minutes

a. September 2 2009

B. Korth - Motion to approve past minutes, 2009.05.06, 2009.06.17, 2009.07.15, 2009.08.12 as distributed by email, second P. Sundareshan, motion passes with 1 abstain

J. Johnson - Motion to approve 2009.09.02 minutes as distributed by email, second B. Korth, motion passes with 1 abstain

VII. Non-Consent Agenda Items

None

VIII. Old Business

a. External Committee Assignments - David Talenfeld

D. Talenfeld - Motion to move all non pressing business to future meeting and take remaining time to discuss agenda, second B. Korth, motion passes with 1 abstain

Discussion about priorities/agenda:

N. Kubota - Representatives need to get constituents to write in, make voice heard to not only council but to administration. As representatives need to get constituents involved not just council.

Alejandrina Barajas (guest, L. Blaney time) - Important to show power and effect of GS. Is it possible to show the statistics of how classes would be effected by GS actions.

L. Blaney - Council needs to get more involved, in addition need to get ASUA/undergraduate perspective in these matters, GS are not alone on campus. About contacting Provost Hay, is there someone that can speak with her?

D. Lopez Negrete - Provost Hay talks to the deans, deans are the ones that make the cuts. The deans are the individuals to talk to because they are invested in the students/departments. Feels that the deans are where efforts of the council should be placed.

J. Johnson - Concern over the effectiveness of a walkout, one day event versus long term effect. Also that research assistants are feeling effects of cuts, some labs are having to reduce coverage making some previously on RA pick up teaching or other work. GS needing to work more to sustain not unique to teaching colleges.

B. Korth - Idea of talking to deans is valid. Talked with dean of College of Science today and while not able to discuss all details at time as was still being worked out, willing to discuss with students once plans are finalized. In regards to walkout/actions, important to keep in mind that actions will have ramifications, must be careful to not act rashly which may ultimate do more harm than good.

A. Barajas - Want to express that should think about the statistics of classes not focus on the walkout itself. Questions how would students be effected if classes weren't taught, if for one day and for multiple days.

N. Kubota - Curious about the comparison of graduate TA versus professor/staff/faculty teaching. If can provide the numbers of comparison could show the impact of GS on the teaching workloads.

P. Sundareshan - Feels that information and presentation will likely have greater impact. May be able to use the "academic freedom" climate to express concerns to students in class. May be able to briefly utilize the audience to convey concerns and issues facing GS, i.e. health care

M. Thomas - As a representative new to student government. Feels that issues facing university are real, there is a lack of money, that the deans/heads do make major decisions. As a GS, appreciates that do not have to take out loans because have TA/RA ability.

J. Collins - On the issue of budget cuts and inability to make differences, the budget is complicated affair and some students may not have appreciation. Must keep in mind that distilling it down to very simple ideas may not be accurate. In regards to the perception of power and the overall effect of a walkout, important to emphasize that students are not getting taught, that they are losing a day of learning that they (the student) will need to learn on own.

C. Christenson - think about redoing TA workload survey, climate has changed since the last time distributed

N. Patel - Reiterate M. Thomas point of having TA versus needed to take out loans to continue education. Council needs to promote working together versus focusing on divisive aspects.

D. Talenfeld - appreciates points made by council but needs specific demands/requirements. Better to take focused and unified points to president and administration, if too broad effectiveness will be low as well as difficult to measure success. What are necessities, no modification to health insurance, etc.

L. Blaney - use Stephen Bieda III's tuition policy from last year to formulate demands. Also capping of student number for TA's, unfair to have to teach mega courses to have job. In

regards to benefits, do not have dental, optical insurance while other institutions do. Most similar institutions have a 2:1 teaching load, while UA has a 2:2. Concern of administration effect, more tuition being brought in than ever before but still needing more, where is the money going?

J. Collins - In regards to longer term goals, a graduate student bill of rights was brought to administration a number of years ago that was unanimously approved by council. Administration eventually shot down the bill but it may be worthwhile to revisit, especially in the current climate.

M. Thomas - Can the council prioritize the list from L. Blaney to make more concrete and focused?

D. Talenfeld - Would like a statement for president from the council, what is absolutely necessary?

D. Lopez Negrete - reiterate that discussion should occur between students and deans, concerned that president is not right forum

D. Talenfeld - Feels that current discussion has raised to level of president. Feels that return to the graduate student bill of rights, at critical juncture, could leave a lasting legacy.

C. Christenson - Instead of going to president with list of requests, go with softer approach. Is it more appropriate to frame how can GS work with you (president/administration) to help meet needs. Going with a softer approach, president/administration more likely to see GS as allies versus antagonists

J. Collins - For point of clarification for council, past bill of rights objections included some undefined language that would conflict with existing policies and conflicts with bill because not drafted by university. Majority of bill was drafted by looking at other institutions that had adopted GS rights. Feels that at this point members of council must make personal choice between fighting for constituents versus protecting own interests.

N. Kubota - Reiterates that important to focus on priorities but also that opportunity before us does not have an expiration date. It is possible to chip away at few high priority issues now and move on to lower priority after have successfully addressed current ones.

L. Blaney - Speaking from experience as part of the GTA round table, if give administration/president a list, individual will know what is desired/targeted. Feel that priorities are to: maintain current tuition remission and maintain benefits at current level. Also, bill of rights may be good to revisit as the current climate, academic freedom, has recently passed through faculty senate and few anticipated it would.

D. Talenfeld - For clarification top priorities of council should be: maintaining current tuition remission, maintaining current benefits and pushing forward a graduate student bill of rights.

D. Talenfeld - Motion to move remaining business to future meetings for purpose of adjourning meeting to draft a letter to President Shelton, second by Kubota - motion passes, no abstain

Meeting adjourned by J. Johnson at 8:15 pm.

b. Office Manager - James Johnson - differed to later meeting

IX. New Business - differed to later meeting

a. "Bridgeification" with ASUA

b. Financial Planning Seminar

X. Call to Adjourn - Adjourned 8:15 pm