

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
MONDAY, JANURARY 12, 2015

Jess Welch, President
Jeremy Auerbach, Vice-President
Trevor Hedberg, Secretary

❖ **CALL TO ORDER**

❖ **ROLL**

- Senators Absent:
 - Robert Truka
 - Jonathan Lindsay/Kate Abrahamsson
 - Matt Ascitutto – Proxy, Noelle Herrera
 - Jaime Call – Excused
 - Sam Rosolina – Excused
 - Kristen Anders – Proxy, Lisa Connor
 - Dustin Mills
 - Allie Rhinehart – Excused
 - Robert Pivar
 - Brian Blank
 - Janna Casperson – Excused
 - Girish Upreti – Excused
 - Jason Strickling – Excused
 - Shawn Ou – Excused
 - Andrew Giminaro
 - Jennie Byrd Haney
 - Bo Wang
 - Nick Sirica
 - Ali Desantis/Kyley Dickson
 - Chris Wilson/Andrew Smith
 - Dongwan Yoon
 - Erik Johnson

❖ **GUEST PRESENTATIONS**

- Graduate Workers Organizing Committee (GWOC)
 - Will Teach for Food: A forum on our futures as academic laborers in TN → February 7th, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm at Barley’s Taproom in Knoxville, TN
 - Organization focuses on trying to enact change at the statewide level
 - Organization website: ucw-cwa.org
- Alan Rutenberg on use of travel award funding
 - Many students who engage in meaningful dissertation research will need access to an archival library.
 - Dr. Rutenberg believes that some GSS travel award funds should be put toward conducting this research (and presumably other specialized dissertation research, since access to such libraries is not a significant feature of dissertation research in many fields).

❖ **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

- Approve Minutes → Minutes approved; two corrections made
- Updates
 - Sex Week funding from SPAC: events during Sex Week were allocated to only a limited number of programs.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
MONDAY, JANURARY 12, 2015

- SEAT has requested that SPAC review that decision to deny funding to these events on the grounds that events focusing on non-Christian viewpoints were completely denied funding.
- The Vice Chancellor provided a response denying that these viewpoints had been discriminated against and mentioning that the amount of funding last year does not guarantee a similar amount of funding for the following year (especially with the recent changes in how student fees are allocated).
- One senator requested that more information about this process be available so that we could make a more informed assessment of how funding was allocated to these events.

❖ **VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

- Updates
 - Reminder about the Chancellor's luncheon on February 13th; Jeremy wants questions or suggestions emailed to him at gss2@utk.edu.

❖ **INTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Chair of Equity & Diversity Committee
 - No Updates; request for committee members to meet
- Chair of Communications & Outreach Committee
 - Next Social: February 26th
 - Town Hall Meeting: March 26th
 - New version of the informative packets for new senators has been drafted.
- Chair of the Travel Awards Committee
 - Recently completed allocating travel awards for the spring semester
 - 211 applications
 - Awarded \$80,000 (or was it \$88,000)
 - \$270,000 requested
 - Main reason for rejection was failure to submit an abstract
 - The other main reason for rejection was having already applied for funding in the fall
 - Debuting pilot program for retroactive awards
 - Gutenberg's proposal → GSS representatives voted decisively against the proposal.
 - Pros
 - ◆ Expand influence of GSS
 - ◆ Dean Hodges supports this idea, and she is a significant and influential supporter of GSS.
 - Cons
 - ◆ Serious worries about a slippery slope: if we expand in this direction, it will quickly become even more inclusive, potentially making it impossible for GSS to allocate the funds fairly or efficiently.
 - ◆ Logistical difficulties in integrating this expansion with the current travel award system
 - The travel awards committee wants feedback regarding how such funds would be best used by particular departments. Senators should email Grady at gsstravel@utk.edu 1-page (or briefer) descriptions of how their departments would use GSS funds by January 26th.
- Chair of the Fun Run Committee
 - Recommendations for T-Shirts: Charlie Brown's on Sutherland
 - Departments interested in hosting Fun Run?
 - Possible to get a description of what events have composed the Fun Run in the past?

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
MONDAY, JANURARY 12, 2015

❖ **EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Updates
 - Commission for Women
 - Women in STEM Symposium: Saturday April 18th
 - Grad Student Appreciation Week Planning Committee is in need of a representative.
 - Jeremy Auerbach has joined Top 25 Milestone Review Committee.
 - Traffic and Parking Committee
 - No parking except on the Ag campus
 - You must apply through your department well in advance to get commuter parking on campus during game days
 - N2 on Volunteer Blvd is never appropriated for game days
 - Plan to finish the Stokely garage within the next year
 - Faculty Senate and Teaching
 - Teaching award for faculty: the finalists have been selected, but the list is still secret.
 - Residency Committee
 - Agreed to allow students to have their residency re-invoked if they were out of state for a year because of a parent's job (though these incidents happen only once every few years).
 - Research Council
 - Workshops regarding data management plans are available

❖ **NEW BUSINESS**

- Graduate student stipend report petition
 - Members of GSS were told that they would receive information about how the graduate student stipends at UT compared to the stipends of other top 25 research institutions by April 2014.
 - This information has not yet been compiled or distributed to GSS.
 - This petition, which will be sent to Dean Lee, calls for that information to be gathered and provided to GSS as soon as possible.
- Call for topics
 - Send emails to gss2@utk.edu with ideas/topics to be discussed at the upcoming Chancellor's luncheon.
 - Distance learning needs to be improved. Javad Seif identified the following problems:
 - Usually, there is only one camera in the classroom, and it is completely stationary. This makes it impossible to view professors if they move out of frame.
 - Sometimes, problems occur with the microphone (e.g., drastic drops in volume or quality), and professors do not notice it, which effectively ruins the class for distance-learning students.
 - Distance students often lack a way to interact with the professor while class is going on.

❖ **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Upcoming events

❖ **ADJOURN**

❖ **COMMITTEE BREAKOUT**

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
MONDAY, JANURARY 12, 2015

Upcoming Graduate Student Senate Meetings

Tuesday, February 3, 2015 at 5:30pm (location TBD)
Wednesday, March 4, 2015 at 5:30pm (location TBD)
Thursday, April 2, 2015 at 5:30pm (location TBD)

Other Events

Chancellor's Spring Luncheon – Friday, February 13, 2015 at 11:45am (location TBD)
“Ice Cream” Social – Thursday, February 19 at 7pm (location TBD)
Big Orange Adventure – Saturday, March 7 (locations and time TBD)
Town Hall Meeting – Thursday, March 26 at 5:30pm (location TBD)