

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**  
**GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE**  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2014

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

❖ **CALL TO ORDER**

❖ **INTRODUCTION OF SENATORS**

- Senators absent
  - Jeremy Auerbach – Excused
  - Danielle Sanok
  - Randi Black – Excused
  - Jaime Call – Excused
  - Cory Vineyard
  - Ali DeSantis – Excused
  - Tiffany Saul – Sent Proxy
  - Kelsey Stephenson
  - Janna Caspersen – Sent Proxy
  - Chris Wilson – Excused
  - Sam Lookatch – Excused
  - Herb Piercy
  - Kyle Letteney
  - Erik Johnson
  - Brian Blank
  - Jason Strickling
  - Dustin Mills
  - Ivonne Ramirez – Excused
  - Hopelyn Clift
  - Samantha Bedsole
  - Anne Turner – Excused
  - Girish Upreti
  - Shawn Ou
  - Andrew Giminaro
  - Jennie Byrd Haney
  - Shannon Rosedale
  - Matt Ascitutto
  - Kendall Cannon – Sent Proxy
  - David Surmick
  - Julie Swafford – Excused

❖ **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

- Minutes for last week were approved.
- Updates
  - Report: Stipends for those in the engineering department were raised to try to counteract the massive fees.
  - Luncheon
    - Thanks to those senators who attended.
    - New parking plans are in the works to resolve problems with current lot availability but are unlikely to be

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**  
**GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE**  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2014

- They have a mobile app for reporting where available parking lots are located; it is posted via Twitter, but it is not yet integrated with UT Apps.
- There are more nursing rooms available than we previously thought, but there are still no nursing rooms on the Ag Campus.
- The administration requested that we put together official information regarding problems with current health insurance; until then, it seems unlikely that any changes to our health care provider will be seriously undertaken.
- The history department needs desks; further information is still pending.

❖ **VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

➤ Updates

- Investigated the concern about UT police having surplus military-grade hardware; everything's under control.
- Currently investigating issues involving student fees: if you enroll as a full-time student but drop down to part-time status, then you are still required to pay the full-time student fee.
- Proposal to include some undergraduates on internal GSS committees → there was some tentative support for this idea

❖ **INTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

➤ Chair of Equity & Diversity Committee

- Some current items on the agenda
  - Residency regulations for tuitions
  - Graduate student stipends
  - Equality benefits for all graduate students
- Diversity Summit → primary objective was to explain how we can start a dialogue about diversity at UT, given that it is the 14th-worst school in the nation when it comes to inclusiveness.
- Most likely, there will be an opportunity for people to provide feedback regarding the current email reports of sexual assault later this semester.
  - Some concerns regarding the due process in sexual assault cases was raised because certain universities in the US have simply expelled students accused of these offenses without undertaking any significant investigation.
  - Concerns were also raised about the language at the bottom of these emails that appears to involve some degree of victim blaming.

➤ Chair of Communication & Outreach Committee

- Organized the social that will take place this evening
- Committee members have been working to develop 30-second commercials regarding certain issues and agenda items (e.g., parking).

➤ Chair of Travel Awards Committee

- A few resolved issues
  - Online submissions will resolve the negative funding requests
  - Send acceptances via email
  - Develop a quantitative way to determine how much money each person receives relative to what they need
  - Break up the form into two simple parts
  - Post stats from previous years (e.g., how many people applied, how many were funded)
- Some unresolved issues
  - Defining what constitutes an “event”

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**  
**GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE**  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2014

- Defining the location-based ranking of the applications (e.g., what constitutes a “regional” venue)
- Crafting a mission statement
- Workshop on November 5th
- A point of clarification: all full-time graduate students are eligible to submit to the GSS travel fund.
- Chair of Fun Run Committee
  - **Sam Rosalina** elected as the new chair.
- ❖ **EXTERNAL COMMITTEES**
  - Two volunteers needed
  - Commission for Women
    - Maternity leave (only allowed to take maternity leave twice)
    - Concerns about victim blaming
  - Faculty Senate Research Council
    - A lot of potential financial resources are available through the UT website
  - Technology Advisory Board
    - Currently replacing 1800 access points on our campus (e.g., Ayers, Presidential Court)
    - Gmail is now available for all UT students
    - Charger loan policy at the library
    - Signed up for 3-year contract with Linda.com
- ❖ **NEW BUSINESS**
  - By-Law Revisions were approved.
  - Residency Solutions for the Advancement of UT (Steven Jones)
    - Goal: improve UT’s in-state-residency policies without significantly impacting UT’s budget.
    - Some solutions:
      - Affidavit solution: allow students to sign an agreement that allows them to be classified as in-state students so long as they live in TN for some time after they receive their degree.
      - Allow departments to offer out-of-state waivers.
      - People who are the significant others of those on fellowship should be offered out-of-state tuition waivers.
    - Plan is to put forward a formal resolution to the Faculty Senate (and hopefully then the Board of Trustees) before long.
- ❖ **CALL FOR TOPICS**
  - About 20% of the students in the chemistry department were shorted about \$200 on their stipend paychecks during the first month of the semester.
  - Many departments (Foreign Language, English, etc.) lack office space.
- ❖ **ADJOURN**
- ❖ **COMMITTEE BREAKOUT**

**Upcoming Graduate Student Senate Meetings**

Thursday, November 6, 2014 at 5:30pm (location TBD)

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**  
**GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE**  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2014

Monday, December 1, 2014 at 5:30pm (location TBD)

**Other Events**

Travel Awards Workshop – Wednesday, November 5, 2014 at 5:30pm (location TBD)