CALL TO ORDER

ROLL

Senators Absent:
- Danielle Sanok
- Randi Black
- Robert Truka
- Jonathan Lindsay/Kate Abrahamsson
- Candace Wilson – Excused
- Richie Livingston – Excused
- Dustin Mills
- Kendra Slayton
- Robert Pivar
- Taylor Hixson – Proxy, Noah Lasley
- Stefan Hodges-Kluck – Proxy
- Brian Rider – Proxy, Jackson Martin
- Jason Strickling
- John Salasin – Excused
- Kelly Rooker
- Julie King
- Jenny Onley
- Andrew Giminaro
- Jennie Byrd Haney
- Nick Sirica
- Herb Piercy – Proxy, Elizabeth Thomas
- Timathoy Estabrooks
- Shannon Rosedale – Proxy, Erika Panek
- Erik Johnson
- Melissa Martin – Excused

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Approve Minutes ➔ two small edits made; minutes approved

Updates
- Signed petitions (related to the graduate student stipends) were submitted at the beginning of the meeting.
- Regarding the graduate student stipends, even without the data being fully compiled, administrators are fairly confident that our stipends are not competitive with top 25 institutions.
- The stipend research is primarily focusing on whether stipends constitute a living wage; thus, some other considerations (e.g., the varied cost of living in various areas of the country) are not a serious focus.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Updates
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2015

- Luncheon on February 13th → wants to meet with committee chairs to formulate rough bullet points to present at the luncheon

❖ INTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

➢ Chair of Equity & Diversity Committee
  - Committee is currently drafting a bill to get an ombudsman for all students at the university
  - During the March 4th meeting, the committee will present a draft of this bill and solicit feedback from other GSS members.
  - Steven Jones delivered a presentation this week to the Faculty Senate proposing changes to the current UTK residency requirements that was well received by most faculty members.

➢ Chair of Communications & Outreach Committee
  - A draft of the orientation packet for GSS senators was recently distributed; the committee requests feedback on this material.
  - Suggested additions:
    - Rough explanation of the organizational scheme of GSS could be helpful
    - Current senators should be instructed to secure senators for the following year (ideally in the spring semester); how senators are chosen is up to each department, though elections are a fairly common method.
  - Next GSS social is scheduled for February 26th at Cool Beans; flyers are now available.
  - The date of the Town Hall Meeting is (most likely) going to change to March 25th.
  - At the Town Hall Meeting, the format is likely to be altered so that we begin by highlighting some of GSS’s recent accomplishments.

➢ Chair of the Travel Awards Committee
  - Last meeting, the committee requested feedback regarding the best use of GSS funds.
    - 20% of those who requested a change want funding for research-generating events.
    - 30% of those who requested a change want funding for events that are not focused on either the creation of original research or presentation of such research (e.g., veterinary externships).
    - There were some other proposals, but they were much less common.
    - A significant portion of respondents (more than 30%) also said that the current GSS allocation of travel awards was fine.
  - Potential revisions to the allocation of GSS funds will be discussed at the next committee meeting.

➢ Chair of the Fun Run Committee
  - The committee has locked down a lot of sponsors for the event.
  - Starting location will now be the amphitheater – not Circle Park.
  - At the moment, there are 9 scheduled stations and 3 other possible stations; more stations would still be appreciated.
  - Posters are available, though the typo regarding the year should be noted.
  - The Big Orange Adventure needs participants. Teams consist of 4-6 people, and it is open to the public – not restricted to graduate students.
  - Volunteers for the Big Orange Adventure (i.e., those that run the various stations) will get a free T-Shirt.

❖ EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

➢ Updates
  - Commission for Women → meeting this week; Jimmy Cheek is visiting the committee
  - Graduate Student Appreciation Week occurs in April: free food, free events, etc.
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2015

• Faculty Senate Graduate Council
  • Presently, graduate students cannot get minuses (e.g., B-) but can receive plusses (e.g., B+); some faculty feel that graduate students should be capable (like undergraduates) of receiving minuses in their courses.
• Advisory Committee on Student Organizations
  • Nothing noteworthy to report except that some student organizations do not follow the basic procedures for writing viable constitutions
• Commission for Blacks
  • Annual conference is coming up, though registration is now closed.
  • Trailblazing series is in progress.
• Dean of Libraries Student Advisory Committee
  • Janna is trying to get the amount of time that grad students can borrow certain periodicals increased from its current 24 hour limit.
• Faculty Senate Library and Information Technology Committee
  • Trying to bring Google Education to UTK
• Faculty Senate Research Council
  • The current amount of time to get an IRB to conduct research currently takes 2 months, which makes things difficult for graduate students on tight timetables.
• SPAC
  • Next meeting is February 9th
• Technology Advisory Board
  • Linda.com is now available to UTK students; about 1500 students are using it presently.
  • The board is working on improving our cell phone network.
  • More feedback is needed regarding wireless connectivity on the Ag Campus.

❖ NEW BUSINESS
  ➢ Call for Topics
    • Jeremy’s proposal: make involvement in the Fun Run mandatory if the Fun Run is extremely successful this year.
    • Kelly Ward is coming to speak about work-life balance later in February; she could give a talk to graduate students on February 17th in the evening, but this would not align well with our upcoming GSS meetings.
    • For the luncheon, we should gather some information about how GSS has helped individual departments and highlight the contributions of the committees; suggestions should be emailed to Jeremy at gss2@utk.edu.
    • Would it possible to gather information about GSS success stories as a way to promote the organization? Yes, but it will require some research on UT alumni.
    • Should we bring up the lack of lactation rooms again? Response at the previous luncheon was, in the eyes of some senators, too superficial and dismissive; according to a recent report, there are actually only 2 lactation rooms on campus.
    • It might be helpful to broach the possibility of getting more money from the administration for GSS Travel Awards, given the increased interest, but such a suggestion would need to be made with appropriate sensitivity and gratitude, since the funds were recently increased by $200,000 annually.

❖ ANNOUNCEMENTS
  ➢ Upcoming events
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2015

❖ ADJOURN
❖ COMMITTEE BREAKOUT

Upcoming Graduate Student Senate Meetings

Wednesday, March 4, 2015 at 5:30pm (Claxton 206 tentative)
Thursday, April 2, 2015 at 5:30pm (Claxton 206 tentative)

Other Events

Chancellor’s Spring Luncheon – Friday, February 13, 2015 at 11:45am (Crest Room)
“Ice Cream” Social – Thursday, February 26 at 7pm (Cool Beans)
Big Orange Adventure – Saturday, March 7 at 9am (HSS Ampitheatre)
Town Hall Meeting – Thursday, March 26 at 5:30pm (Shiloh Room tentative)