



GSS Meeting

Wednesday, February 05th, 2020, 6:00 pm
Student Union, Room 169

Meeting called to order by Elina Geut at 6:00pm; minutes recorded by Simon Rotzer

1. Opening Remarks
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Attendance
 - i. Taken via QR-code; alternatively: tiny.utk.edu/GSSFeb2020
 - ii. Present: 61 out of 74 filled-senator positions – meeting has a quorum
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - a. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 9th, 2020
 - b. Motion to approve (Jonathan Kubesch), second (Stacie Beach); all in favor
3. President's Report
 - a. Sue Choi, GSS Vice President
 - i. David is out of town for a conference
 - ii. Couple of things
 1. Election timeline
 - a. This will be posted soon, but get it on your calendars; we will announce that we have elections in March; if you are interested in running for President or Vice President we would like to talk to you; declare your intent to Simon Rotzer (gss3@utk.edu); info will be posted soon
 2. Junior Senators
 - a. Would like to continue using the language; "Junior Senator" should be used in departments; could be a proxy; could be a future senator; please consider using this language; we want to make sure that there is continuity with involvement in GSS
 3. Notes from David Willis
 - a. Looking for volunteers for Vision Committee; working with Chancellor; if you are interested (not just GSS senator), let Sue Choi know after the meeting
 - b. Vice Chancellor of Student Life Search Committee; if you want to be involved David is looking for proxies and input; come see Sue Choi after the meeting please
 4. Question (Jonathan Kubesch): In terms of introducing the "Junior Senator"- language, especially when thinking about successor: What do we want to include in terms of the

language? How are we doing that? "Hey! Come with me and now you're it?"

- a. Answer (Sue Choi): Bring them to the meetings, Senator Socials; just bring them; GSS meetings are public meetings so they are encouraged to stop by; transitional meeting would be good

b. Dean Thompson's Update

- i. Elections: I encourage you all to consider running; we need good representatives; I enjoyed working with Sue Choi and David Willis; great for professional development; access to highest people on campus (Chancellor; Provost); it is a rewarding activity
- ii. Correction on one thing: Vice Chancellor of Student Life-search: you cannot have a proxy, but I encourage you to be involved in the open forums; there will be announcements for campus visits for the candidates; often Vice Chancellor of Student Life is thought to be an undergraduate thing, but s/he also controls resources for graduate students; I encourage you to participate in these interviews when they happen
- iii. Graduate Education Week: next week; Governor Lee has declared it; we will be celebrating it on campus; several departments are doing it; let me remind you about an event I am hosting: "Cookies and Conversations", next Wednesday at 1:00PM to 2:30PM at Graduate Commons; stop by and let me know what is going on
- iv. Students fees came up last meeting: we are in the process of gathering data on fees; there is a group of students who gathered info on that by themselves; Chancellor is interested; right now I am gathering all information to see what a change would cost and then provide that info to the Provost and Chancellor; fingers crossed; we are working on it
- v. Continue to have meetings on student mental health; would like you to continue to brain-storming and come up with ideas we could use
- vi. We are trying what we can to support you
- vii. Questions
 1. No questions; looking forward to seeing you next Wednesday

4. Committee Reports

a. Legislative Steering, Austin Boyd

- i. Last meeting, I introduced two amendments we get to vote on this meeting
- ii. First one is just a word change: four permanent committees to five that currently exist; this is the first vote
 1. Motion to make the change (Donovan Justice); second (Jonathan Kubesch); change accepted; but second vote needed next meeting
- iii. Second: change to art 5. "appointment section"; currently it says that the President can appoint students to the Graduate Council, but it also says the s/he needs to serve in this position, so we would just clean this up

1. Motion to make the change (Jonathan Kubesch); second (Donovan Justice); change accepted
- iv. Third: this one is the one we need a discussion; we want to make this addition; "once a quorum is achieved for a meeting, it will not be lost"; the question is: what happens if we dip under the quorum number? We have not had that issue yet, but what if departments are not showing, or people are not there; do we have to end the meeting? This is how the faculty senate maintains their quorum.
 1. These are the pros and cons:
 - a. Pros: keep quorum regardless; prevents GSS from staging a walkout
 - b. Cons: prevents a walk-out; assumes a senator that is not here but left would be voting in favor
 2. Open it up for discussion; any other pros and cons before we move to first vote?
- v. Discussion
 1. Question (Derek Boyd): Where is attendance currently at?
 - a. Answer (Sue Choi): there are 60 people present so far, but 72 on the roster
 2. Question (Suzanne Sawusch): Is there a scenario when the meeting would get going, but we could not vote?
 - a. Answer (Austin Boyd): that could be an alternative; if people do not like this we could suggest it today; only concern: we would need to find a way to continue keeping track of attendance, right now we only take attendance once; we are not taking active head
 3. Question (Jonathan Kubesch): Are we representatives of the department, or our own? If we walk out, then there will probably be more consequences; but if you are a trustee then I could totally see many not caring about what a trustee thinks; what are we according to the constitution? Should we add something to the bylaws like "well, you represent the department"; if you are a representative you would lose this
 4. Question (Donovan Justice): As part of my time there has never been things like a walk out; assuming that people that will take that away; if people do not show up, we cannot vote on that, correct?
 - a. Answer (Austin Boyd): yes, we would have to go home
 5. Comment (Tracey Peters): As a solution to still maintain voting privileges: incorporate that into the attendance sheet: add a "I am leaving early"; can we incorporate a "this is what we will be voting on"?
 - a. Answer (Austin Boyd): thought about that before; thought about just doing surveys; opens the concern that people would just vote and then leave early

6. Question (Either Elizabeth O'Connell): Could we do a code for voting like with Kahoot that we only give out here? Another person giving out the code?
 - a. Answer (Austin Boyd): her idea was that you would vote and then just leave
 7. Comment (Jonathan Kubesch): Concern with vote before leaving early; that is not an anonymous ballot anymore; if Kahoot can do that than yes; if you want to walk out you could just tell people before
 - a. Comment (Junes Ossman): my major concern is when we have a minority of people voting on the student body; with the other bodies I worked at: once you lose quorum you can continue the meeting but not vote on anything
 8. Question (Amanda Lake Heath): Do we currently have any procedures if there were any kind of emergencies like the fire alarm going off and nobody would come back?
 - a. Answer (Austion Boyd): this would cover emergency cases like that if we would dip under
 - b. Comment (Amanda Lake Heath): I do not think people would think about walking out, but fire alarm might be an issue
 9. Comment (Shiela Hawkins): response to Jonathan Kubesch; I do not think there is anonymity in walking out; if you do yay or nay there is no anonymity; if we could have a way of doing an anonymous vote that would be good and anonymous;
 - a. Follow-up Question (Tracey Peters): When they walk out there vote is automatically yes; if there is an option that when you sign up and you need to leave just have an option to say no?
 10. Question (Jonathan Kubesch): What ever happened to the abstention?
 - a. Comment (Dean Thompson): even for a thing as voting on the minutes an abstention would be good to have
 11. Comment (Elizabeth O'Connell): I like the idea of an emergency; if a bunch of people leave because of an emergency a minority will vote for the majority
- vi. Vote on proposed change (Austin Boyd)
1. Before we motion to a vote: there are pros and cons to both; if you are in favor of what is written here, then say so
 2. If you are against it, or in favor of another option, for example: meetings can continue so that we would have to take headcount, Kahoot, code/screen, then vote nay;
 - a. If so, this here (on the screen) in yellow would die tonight and we could vote on a new proposal next meeting
 3. Put it to a vote

- a. Abstentions: two; opposed: some; pass: only a few
- b. Verdict: the motion has not passed; we will not be voting on this next meeting; I will send out an email with more options once we get feedback on it
 - 1. Question (Jonathan Kubesch): Can we do a Google poll or something?
 - 2. Question (Andrew Putt): Could you have an option for "other" or "write in"?
 - a. Answer (Austin Boyd): yes, we will include that
 - b. Email will come from David Willis or Sue Choi, but at least two weeks before the meeting
- b. Treasurer, Amanda Lake Heath
 - i. No updates; budget is the same
- c. Equity and Diversity, Derek Boyd (proxied by Katherine Bryan)
 - i. A few matters
 - 1. Thanksgiving Dinner Event we want to host: briefly talked to people at the Office of Diversity on campus who recommended hosting it in April; March is not a good month; shoot for April now
 - 2. Thanksgiving Dinner Event: will be a similar event hosted by UT's Teaching and Learning Innovation Center; "Diversi-Tea"; facilitating difficult dialogues; difficult conversations; roleplay, different strategies; similar to what we want to do
 - a. I figure: why reinvent the wheel?
 - b. It would help us to send a few senators to this event; urge you to all go because we can benefit; but specifically have somebody there to take notes on how we could navigate this for our own use
 - 3. Event at the Rock; students at the Rock; want it to be university-wide so bring graduates, undergrads, and faculty; be on the lookout for that; that would be a good way of continuing our work on campus
 - 4. We, as a committee, wrote a statement in support to of students that are Iranian nationals; written several weeks ago, but not published yet
 - a. We informally propose a process to publish a statement we came up within 48h to acknowledge the work and effort people put in there
 - 5. While we were researching this topic we wanted to do a project on how to help out international students, e.g., get them in contact with pro-bono immigration lawyers, so that students on this campus have access to legal advice; we had it at the College of Law, but the professor left; right now students do not have access to that; that would probably require more conversations

6. We have information on mental health ad hoc
7. Question (Chloe Sandoval): I thought the Townhall will be part of GPSAW?
 - a. Answer (Sue Choi): we will talk about that soon, because there is general confusion
8. Comment (Donovan Justice): I am from the law school and from the clinic; even though the professor left, we still serve the community; UT Legal Connect; they still take those issues, also for UT students
 - a. Comment (Katherine Bryan): the people we talked to told us that since this person is gone it does not work anymore
9. Comment (Shahram Hatefi Hesari): judging from what I know about the pro bono: we had a problem last year with a person looking for pro bono; if there is person who can do it, we need to promote it on the GSS website or so; this is a problem that some of our friends had
 - a. Comment (Sue Choi): we have a “resources”-section on the GSS website; maybe if a few people could get together and do a “resources for international students: that would be awesome
10. Question (Jonathan Kubesch): Have you been monitoring the increasing paranoia/discrimination about Asian students with Corona?
 - a. Comment (Katherine Bryan): we are seeing this as a problem as well; seeing this a lot on campus; ramped fear and hysteria; we definitely want to deal with that
 - b. Question (Sierra Turner, proxy for Ashlyn Schwartz): coming from the Department of Public Health; would your committee partner with the Public Health sub-committee? We are promoting health tips in our department so we would you like to adapt some language we are using
 - i. Answer (Katherine Bryan): yes, definitely; we take on physical aspects and also how we talk about it; making sure that we put down some facts and focus on eliminating some of the racism and xenophobia connected to it
- d. Travel Awards, Nicholas Sarafolean
 - i. Summer applications are open now; email from Graduate School should be going out soon; we do not have the listserv; process is the same as with spring since process worked well
 - ii. Question (Jonathan Kubesch): What is the window?
 1. Answer (Nicholas Sarafolean): until Monday, April 14th, at 5PM
 - iii. Comment (Andrew Putt): I wanted to pass along good feedback from my department
- e. Professional Development Travel Awards, Kamille Piacquadio

- i. Accepted quite a few applications; funded \$17,000-ish; deadline is also May 31st
 - 1. Comment (Sue Choi): no longer for travel anymore; but also for online workshops; if you can prove that it will further you professionally
 - ii. Question (Deb Acharyya): If there is a professional development course happening before a conference is that a Travel Award or a Professional Development Travel Award?
 - 1. Answer (Dean Thompson): if you are presenting then apply for regular Travel Awards; if you are not presenting than the Professional Travel Awards
 - 2. Question (Chloe Sandoval): What if you are doing both?
 - a. Answer (Dean Thompson): use Travel Awards, they will give you more money
 - b. Question (Sharam Hatefi Hesari): there is a maximum of \$1000 for that; usually workshops take a week and \$1000 cannot cover expenses to travel to the West Coast; is there anything we can do about that?
 - i. Comment (Dean Thompson): not this time, because it would be unfair to people who already went; but we can keep it in mind in the future; it is not meant to fully finance yourself
 - c. Question (Sharam Hatefi Hesari): So next year?
 - i. Comment (Dean Thompson): maybe, but it is carryover money; if there is none, then there is none
- f. Programming and Events, Joshua Williams
- i. Several events
 - 1. Caffeine and Coffee: soon; for graduate students in the Graduate Commons
 - 2. Tomorrow night: 6:00PM to 7:00PM: Alliance Brew, sorry that this fell through our emails
 - 3. GPSAW: first week in April; heavy role of GSS
 - 4. Comment (Amanda Lake Heath): the event tomorrow is only for senators and one more person; do not tell everybody
 - a. Answer (Joshua Williams): The room only holds up to 60 people
 - 5. Question (Shahram Hatefi Hesari): Would you please send out an email about that?
 - 6. Question (Simon Rotzer): Is that the GSS Senator Social?
 - a. Answer (Joshua Williams): yes, but we will do another one soon; wanted to do it earlier, but they did not have any openings
- g. Mental Health Ad Hoc Committee, Chloe Sandoval
- i. David Willis and I have met and prepare a survey and report for Dean Thompson

1. We decided to use a survey from the Berkley Assembly on graduate student happiness and wellbeing; modify it;
 2. We will meet next week to do IRB and should have preliminary data soon
- ii. Met with Dr. Paul McAnear (Head of Counselling): he was extremely open to what we had to say; happy to partner with us and Dean Thompson; will provide help with the survey
 - iii. We will meet with Dean Thompson and the Chancellor but that might not happen until the end of the year
 - iv. Comment (Jonathan Kubesch): good work, thank you for what you do, we appreciate it
 - v. Last thing: we are also meeting with Center for Student Success to have them provide stuff for graduate student which they do not have right now; prevent graduates from reaching crisis levels
- h. Annual Fundraiser, Jonathan Kubesch (Interim Chair)
- i. Thanking Vincenzo Nocera for coming up with the t-shirt design
 - ii. T-Shirts
 1. Olivia Ray came up with t-shirts designs; we as a committee discussed the top choices; we will have a few ready for the next annual fundraiser to make some money; we will show you two options for t-shirts for this year's annual fundraiser
 2. Motion to vote on design one and two via voice vote
 - a. Design one: a number of aye/yes; design two: a number of aye/yes; no conclusive result; switching over to a count vote
 - i. Design one: 24 hands raised; design two: 26 hands raised; design number two wins the vote
 3. Another delivery: old lead on printer for t-shirts was not good; we are working with David Willis to find another; working out numbers; looking into doing a vendor's table
 - a. To my committee: please meet to get a plan for that
 4. Charity: Smokey's Pantry; if you have a more charitable thing in mind just let us know
 5. Proud of my committee; most deliverables we brought out in a while
 - iii. Annual fundraiser: if you bring a cup you can have as much pop/soda as you can drink
 - iv. Comment (Chloe Sandoval): I would like to keep Smokey's Pantry
 - v. Comment (Shiela Hawkins): if you are doing it for a specific place, maybe make it clear on the shirt so that people know it is a charitable donation
 - vi. Comment (Brandie McConkey): concerning the design of the shirt; idea was to create a classic shirt that GSS can continue to do; sororities have shirts that always have a similar design; idea: if we start a shirt this year it can be continued as a "classic" and people can have a collection of those shirts; that was the idea behind it

- vii. Question (Kamille Piacquadio): Are we looking at a printing company that is larger or local?
 - 1. Answer (Jonathan Kubesch): hoping for local, but we do not have a number yet
 - a. Comment (Kamille Piacquadio): First Impressions out in Seymour might be a good choice
 - viii. Comment (Andrew Putt): for people who like recognition for donating for something: I could get stickers printed for free if needed
 - ix. Comment (Sue Choi): if you have more suggestions come see after the meeting
5. New Business
- a. GPSAW
 - i. Will talk about this extensively in March
 - 1. These are the events GSS usually hosts
 - a. Trivia Night (Monday)
 - b. BBQ in the Park (Wednesday)
 - c. "Thanksgiving Dinner" (Thursday)
 - d. Awards Breakfast (Friday)
 - 2. We need a lot of help and assistance
 - ii. Question (Stacie Beach) Could we go back to the dates?
 - 1. Answer (Sue Choi): March 30 Monday til April 1 Friday official events coming out late; planning meeting is every other Friday so stop by if you want to
 - iii. Question (Wesley Lamberson): Are we making sure to not run out of BBQ this year?
 - 1. Answer (Sue Choi): we are trying our best
 - 2. Comment (Amanda Lake Heath): I did it last year: we had double the food then the year before
 - iv. Comment (Jonathan Kubesch): we could use card swipe to keep the undergraduates out
 - b. Dr. Ferlin McGaskey, Teaching and Learning Innovation
 - i. I will talk about a few things we are doing that you can participate in: program designed for graduate students and postdocs
 - ii. Several things we are planning on doing soon; there is a list going around
 - iii. Highlighting a few things
 - 1. Innovative Teaching and Learning Conference during GPSAW innovative things going on in the classroom; faculty from UT, Georgia, Virginia, Louisiana; event will last all day, but you do not have to be present all day
 - a. Keynote: Claire Major; assessment in the classroom; innovative teaching; keynote at breakfast and lunch
 - b. Conference is absolutely free; all you have to do is register; we will feed you breakfast and lunch
 - c. Poster session is going on

2. Register at teaching.utk.edu/itl2020/; to volunteer: fmcgaske@utk.edu (e.g., moderate sessions; help putting up stuff)
- iv. Developing Future Faculty-events on campus:
 1. CIRTL: Center for the Integration of Research and Learning; part of the network; offering both local and national events
 2. FUEL: 6-7 seminars to help you think about teaching; ongoing and every semester; next one in summer
 3. Teaching Presentation Tuesday: opportunity to vet a teaching practice in front of people who are experts
 - a. Might be helpful for people who do a teaching talk for the job market
 - b. Just register for it: teaching.utk.edu then look it up and find the registration
 4. Online Teaching Certificate: ongoing right now; will be continuing that; catching on; will help you distinguish yourself; definitely going to offer this again in Fall and Spring
 5. If you want to learn more about CIRTL events go to teaching.utk.edu/cirtl-network-upcoming-programs/
 - a. Opportunities to engage with people from across the U.S.
 - b. With CIRTL: since we are members you will always be a member, even after you graduate for as long as you wish
 6. If you want more information just contact me and I will be happy to talk about it
 - a. Comment (Sue Choi): I just wanted to voice my appreciation; not only is the content great, but you can also interact with people who would want to teach
 - c. GSS Senator Social
 - i. Tomorrow; very casual; if you have people interested just bring them over;
 - d. Other New Business
 - i. Question (Chloe Sandoval): Is the Alliance dog friendly?
 1. The patio is, but not the room we are in (events guy)
 - ii. Question (Jonathan Kubesch and Surendra Singh): Wanted to follow up on the bridge question; are there any updates?
 1. Answer (Dean Thompson): talked to a couple of people but we do not know there is any movement; people are interested and talking about it, but no concrete plans
 2. Question (Jonathan Kubesch): Can we make sure they will do it?
 - iii. Comment (Sue Choi): during GPSAW we want to make every graduate student is involved; if your department/school has any events planned, please let us know
 - iv. Comment (Sharam Hatefi Hesari): thank you to the people who send me updates for their websites

1. People who send me no picture please send me one
 2. People who have sent me pages of information please send less; we only have one page
 3. Please have a look at the senator website and give me your feedback
6. Adjournment, at 7:14PM
- a. Motion to adjourn (Sean Callahan); second (Jonathan Kubesch); abstentions: two; opposed: one; in favor: majority; meeting adjourned

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 4th, 2020 at 6:00 pm in SU169