



### **Special Session Minutes**

Tuesday, May 10, 2022 **5:30 pm**

Primarily Zoom and Student Union, Room 169

Senators Present: Refer to Appendix

Ex-Officio Members Present: Dr. Dixie Thompson, Nick Jakel

Full meeting can be viewed here: <https://fb.watch/fAi8XkBje1/>

Call to Order

Zoom Reminders

- Keep camera on
- Raise hand on zoom
- Say voting number when you speak

Attendance

- Quorum reached: 35/70

President's Report

- Thanks for being here for this special session.
- My remarks and this meeting will be brief because today's focus is on our votes and finishing out the year on a strong note
- Voting is critical today to send a strong messages to the University on two fronts
- Housing and a thank you resolution
- Housing remarks
  - I want to thank lufuno and the e/d committee for their work on this
  - Took a hard look at the published literature and stats to build this document
  - Housing is a major issue in knoxville, especially for first time grad students, international

- We are currently at a crisis point, many students will struggle to secure housing unless major efforts taken immediately
- We cannot afford to lose talent to secondary schools or other SEC universities because we do not have affordable housing (or even physically having the space).
- This is a critical and timely resolution, and we appreciate your support.
- Document was passed to Justices, Exec committee, GSS coordinator, and graduate school for review and revision; all parties gave the green light.
- Current version (as distributed) has not received any additional revisions.
- I will let Lufuno make additional comments regarding the resolution before we open for discussion/vote.
- TY Resolution remarks
  - I am very proud of the thank you resolution
  - George will speak about the details further as sponsor
  - I would like to discuss background and how this came to be
  - This groundbreaking decision is the culmination of advocacy work done by dozens of students, staff, and faculty over the course of many years, at least 5 years in the making.
  - It will help to address some of the financial challenges that many current graduate and professional students encounter during their time on Rocky Top and make us more desirable to potential students.
  - Huge win in addition to the 2.5 mil acquired over the last 5 years for stipends as well as the one time fellowships that dean thompson was able to distribute this semester.
- Want praise Chancellor Plowman for the reallocation of university funds to make graduate education more accessible to students with full-time assistantships.
- I have seen all of the work behind the scenes to actually make this happen — arduous task of reallocating funds to cover these fees for students has been in the works for many years now, and this semester was when things finally came to fruition.
- This resolution will send a strong message of unity that our grad students support this decision and encourage further actions to improve our graduate student finances.
- It also reinforces our desire and drive to continue to advocate for our university to utilize all available options in order to financially support graduate and professional students.
- We will continue our efforts to combat increasing food, housing, and basic need insecurity on campus.
- Was passed to Justices, Exec committee, GSS coordinator, and graduate school for review and revision
- Current version (as distributed) has not received any additional revisions.
- I will let George make additional comments regarding the resolution before we open for discussion/vote.

- We also have some brief remarks and discussion topics for initiatives in the works, which will be shared after the votes.
- With that, I will turn the floor back to George so we can begin our votes and discussion.
- Thank you again for your support and your participation in this final session

#### Approve Minutes

- February, March, and April
- Open ballot for approval as read
- 68 moves to approve, 67 seconded
  - Separate votes for each month's minutes, are on the same google form though
  - 30/40 voting in the affirmative currently, more trickling in
  - Approved

#### Resolutions

- Housing
  - Lufuno Phophi, ED chair and primary author
  - Graduate students most likely to be affected by housing insecurity
  - Housing market in Knoxville and average rent means most graduate students will experience housing insecurity
  - Helps grad students in that, and university in maintaining talent
  - Hope you vote to improve housing situation
  - 68 moves to bring to floor for consideration, 14 seconded
  - Open for discussion of the document as read
  - Limiting comments to one minute
  - All comments welcome
  - No comments
  - Move to voting
  - Votes still coming in, currently 28/41 voting to approve
  - Housing resolution has passed
- Lufuno acknowledged the ED committee for their work on the committee, thank you Joseph and Manu and Nick

#### Thank you Resolution

- George is speaking - and introduces the resolution
- This has been a priority for GSS for years
- Worked with administration in a variety of ways to make voices heard.
- Leadership to issues to administration in meetings instead of via resolution.
- Recapped 5/2/22 faculty senate announcement about mandatory fees being covered for GAs
- This resolution recognizes and acknowledges the decision and thanks various entities.
- Encourages senators to vote in the affirmative for this resolution
- Call for motion to bring to floor

- 14 moves to bring to floor, 27 seconds
- Open for discussion, revisions, and comments
- Discussion
  - No discussion, revisions, or comments
- Vote
- Votes coming in, 29/41 voting to approve
- Resolution is passed
- Fantastic step in the right direction, have a lot of work still to do, which we will be doing over the summer and in the next academic year

#### Targeted Discussion

- Proposal on graduate student stipends
- Igor Bernardi
  - Lots of effort
  - Due to time and unforeseen circumstances, we don't have something to vote on today
  - Not ready, is a very touchy document
  - For next Legislative and Steering Committee to improve upon and work towards
  - Many graduate students below the poverty line, don't want to wait too long on this resolution, but timing with fee waivers may not be right
  - Open floor
    - No comments
  - Will be available next year for any assistance on this
- Advisor360 feedback proposal
  - Isis Fukai to give remarks
  - Purpose is to work with grad students, faculty, and ombudsmen to improve advisorship
  - Widespread problem, not unique to UT
  - Want to do the best we can to optimize the dynamic between grad student and professor and give grad students a voice
  - Want to present and vote next year, please send any comments or what can be improved
  - Open Floor
  - Hunter - thanks to leg steering committee
  - 66 - would like to mention that its important for grad students to know the steps when they have an issue with professor, what to do and who to talk to, and protect graduate student. Need support, when you change mentors you are left in limbo until a new one is found. Thanks
- HIV PREP medication
  - Zac hyder in charge, but unavailable so Hunter will be giving some information
  - Student Health Center does offer it, but it is out of pocket, they recommend going to the community for that resource, something w insurance

- Good to open dialogue between GSS and SHC to improve understanding of what they offer
- George comments on the proposal
  - Echo these sentiments and encouragements, all of these are important, lot of hard work in getting them to this stage, that work will not be for nothing
  - Will continue working w the committees over the summer and in the fall on these and new resolutions

#### New Business

##### Open floor

- Comments from George
  - Use attendance QR code or form to show quorum was maintained
  - From the graduate school: please keep pushing the academic support award and encourage your constituents and departments to apply, significant money left over, want grad students to receive that money and support
  - GSS looking for positions for next year both appointed on exec, and committee chair, email coming soon to express interest, will be seeing who is a good fit in an interim capacity over the summer
  - Attendance : 35/70 active senators in attendance, quorum maintained
  - 68 moves to adjourn, 26 seconds

## Appendix: Senator Attendance

### GSS Special Session

05.10.22

Department by College	Voting #	Name	Present
Architecture	1	Sarah Kenney	NO
Landscape Architecture	2	Mary Robbins	YES
Anthropology	3	Brigid Ogden	NO
Anthropology	4	Katherine Park	NO
Art	5	--	N/A
Biochemistry and Cellular and Molecular Biology	6	Bethany Campbell	YES
Biochemistry and Cellular and Molecular Biology	7	Logan Dunn	NO
Chemistry	8	Trevor Wilson	YES
Chemistry	9	Elizabeth O'Connell	YES
Earth and Planetary Sciences	10	Kaitlyn Gauvey	NO
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology	11	Hope Ferguson	NO
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology	12	Nate Gibson	NO
English	13	James Shepard	YES
English	14	Karen Norwood	YES
Geography	15	Victoria Haynes	NO
History	16	Jason Jonson	NO
Life Sciences	17	--	N/A
Mathematics	18	Evan Habbershaw	YES
Mathematics	19	--	N/A

Microbiology	20	Diana Ramierz	YES
Microbiology	21	--	N/A
Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures	22	Sara Rico-Godoy	YES
Music	23	Tracy Clark	NO
Music	24	--	N/A
Philosophy	25	Anne Merrill	NO
Physics and Astronomy	26	Igor Bernardi	YES
Physics and Astronomy	27	Ben Thornberry	YES
Political Science	28	George Fields	YES
Political Science	29	Caitlin Goff	NO
Psychology	30	Jane Kim	YES
Psychology	31	Rebecca Skadberg	YES
Sociology	32	Rossana Diaz	NO
Theatre	33	Rachel Darden	NO
Advertising & Public Relations	34	Dusty Bryan	NO
Communication and Information	35	--	N/A
Information Sciences	36	Joseph Winberry, proxy for Jess Barfield	YES
Information Sciences	37	Kat Capstick	YES
Journalism & Electronic Media	38	--	N/A
Child and Family Studies	39	Cassie Sorrells	NO
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies	40	Jeana Partin	NO
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies	41	Zac Hyder	NO
Educational Psychology and Counseling	42	--	N/A
Educational Psychology and Counseling	43	--	N/A

Kinesiology, Recreation, & Sport Studies	44	BJ Armstead	NO
Kinesiology, Recreation, & Sport Studies	45	Leighton Chappell	YES
Nutrition	46	Anna Jackson	NO
Public Health	47	Catherine Warner	YES
Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Management	48	Youngdeok Lee	NO
Theory and Practice in Teacher Education	49	Arianna Banack	NO
Theory and Practice in Teacher Education	50	Jared Huisingh	NO
Accounting and Information Management	51	Jack Badger	NO
Accounting and Information Management	52	Alex Zukowski	YES
Business Administration	53	Joseph Moulden	YES
Business Administration	54	Laura Ritch	YES
Business Analytics and Statistics	55	--	N/A
Economics	56	Richard Beem	NO
Finance	57	--	N/A
Management & Entrepreneurship	58	--	N/A
Marketing	59	Melissa Baucum	NO
Marketing	60	--	N/A
Supply Chain Management	61	Thu Trang Hoang	NO
Supply Chain Management	62	--	N/A
Agricultural Leadership, Education, & Communications	63	Kendall Martin	NO
Agricultural Leadership, Education, & Communications	64	--	N/A
Agricultural & Resource Economics	65	Mary Marks	NO
Animal Science	66	Alison Pfau	YES



Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science	67	Alexis Gillmore	YES
Entomology & Plant Pathology	68	Kassie Hollabaugh	YES
Food Science	69	Melissa Dein	NO
Forestry, Wildlife & Fisheries	70	Davis Carter	YES
Plant Sciences	71	Devon Carrol	YES
Cent/Interdisc Rsrch Grad Edu (Bredesen Center)	72	Adedasola Ademola	YES
Cent/Interdisc Rsrch Grad Edu (Bredesen Center)	73	Isis Fukai	YES
Law	74	Jake Gray	NO
Law	75	Ronald Young	NO
Nursing	76	Elliot Loughran	NO
Nursing	77	Courtland Kuntz	NO
Social Work	78	Aritra Moulick	NO
Social Work	79	Dorothy Wallis	NO
Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering	80	--	N/A
Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering	81	Austin Conte	YES
Civil & Environmental Engineering	82	Mohammad Safaritaherkhani	NO
Civil & Environmental Engineering	83	Nastaran Moradloo	NO
Electrical Engineering & Computer Science	84	Manu Rathore	YES
Electrical Engineering & Computer Science	85	Samaneh Morovati	YES
Industrial & Systems Engineering	86	Ebrahim Sharifnia	YES
Industrial & Systems Engineering	87	--	N/A
Materials Science & Engineering	88	Zane Smith	YES
Materials Science & Engineering	89	Melanie Buziak	YES

Mechanical, Aerospace & Biomedical Engineering	90	--	N/A
Mechanical, Aerospace & Biomedical Engineering	91	--	N/A
Nuclear Engineering	92	Christian Young	NO
Nuclear Engineering	93	Evan Williams	YES
Comparative and Experimental Medicine	94	Ana Towe	NO
Comparative and Experimental Medicine	95	Lufuno Phophi	YES