

GSA Meeting #7 – November 8, 2006

Minutes

In attendance:

John	Ryan	Patrick	Meg
Amanda	Bree	Katia	Stephen
Robyn	Erin	Mark	

1. Approval of minutes
 - Motion to approve minutes from last meeting put forth by Ryan, seconded by Patrick
 - Motion passed; minutes approved
2. CASSC update
 - new protocols were supposed to be approved at yesterday's meeting; however the TCSA had a list of changes/recommendations and so committee members need additional time to review their changes
 - waste and recycling issues will be discussed at the next meeting
 - parking issues: individuals with parking passes will be permitted to park in any lot after 6PM starting next year; pay and display passes can now be used in any parking lot
 - the master plan for Trent U was discussed – information on this master plan is posted on the internet
3. CUPE update
 - AGM took place on November 2nd: by-laws were passed; units 1 and 2 merged; new executive was elected
 - graduate student TAs need to have copies of collective agreement with CUPE; a hardcopy will be placed in the GSA office – when the online version becomes available then a link to the document will be on the GSA website
 - Trent CUPE website is cupe3908.org
4. Grad Studies update
 - haven't met since last GSA meeting
5. Senate update
 - new librarian has been hired
 - research policy document was passed (now there is an official policy)
 - trent-queen's contract expired, hasn't been renegotiated... right now Queen's gets all govt money so new contract may be better for Trent University
 - acad research policy sc – nserc wants to look at leadership as a component of evaluation
6. Subcommittees
 - tuition subcommittee: Robyn and Stephen met with Dean Evans, he was generally supportive of our goals

- the tuition subcommittee is researching various tuition issues (levels of minimum guaranteed funding, tuition waivers at other schools, etc.)
- planning on a survey to find out why grad students came here tested out on GSA exec; the Board of Governors wanted a tuition increase of 8% (BoG) except Dean Evans petitioned against it (a 4% increase over 4 years was accepted last year)
- grad student tuition is based on a formula which includes what other schools charge, the size of Trent, and the amount of money coming in; the tuition waiver was initially started when grad students weren't getting paid at all, but now the waiver doesn't "fit" with the business plan
- Dean Evans suggested that only two schools had tuition waivers/decreasing tuition, which (from our understanding) is not the case; the level of funding is supposed to be maintained at a certain level with scholarships, but scholarships are often not available to all students (e.g. scholarship money going to top up the remainder of OGS awards)
- VP of Development, Diane Lister, is a potential person to lobby for more money

7. Seminar series

- received 9 abstracts; advertising might be a bit late because speakers were just selected
- colour posters for advertising, more catchy, printed at print shop, will have to distribute and post

8. Wireless/internet issues in the Science Complex

- wireless internet just for the Science Complex: \$75,000!!! wireless internet in the Crypt cost \$20,000
- grad offices are wired for internet access, but there is the problem of having to give your personal computer/laptop to IT to be wiped in order to get onto network

9. Health benefits

- May start grad students don't get coverage until the fall semester and they can't opt-out until the following fall, students can opt-in in January but they pay less and have reduced coverage
- right now there is not enough money for grad students to have their own plan but as the grad student population grows to 600 students in 4 years, we can potentially get our own contract with Green Shield;
- Robyn suggested a possibility of using part of the accumulated funds to improve our health benefits
- survey on student satisfaction with the current health plan will be released later this school year

10. Constructive criticism

- Social events:
 - the GSA hasn't planned enough social events so far this year
 - there was not enough advance notice for the Halloween pub night
 - we should try and plan different types of events to attract all grad students

- we should commit to planning one or two events per month on a regular basis
- we need to start advertising the GSA Christmas party so that people can make plans...
 - idea to use the same Festivus theme from last year
 - plan to collect canned goods
- Program reps:
 - idea to have a blurb about the program reps with an e-mail link posted on GSA website in order to direct comments & concerns to the program reps (students talk amongst themselves but don't necessarily share their thoughts with their reps)
 - would be fairly straightforward to have a message board/listserv/blogspot.com link from GSA webpage for students to post their comments; seems like this should be a goal

11. AOB

- GSA exec meetings will return to Tuesday at 4:30PM – next meeting 21st of Nov
- seminar series talks next Wednesday at 7PM