

GSA Executive Meeting Minutes – January 19, 2009, 4-6pm, Traill SCR

Present:

Allison
Andrea
Colin
Jean
Jenn
John
Josh
Katy
Lynette
Nina
Peter
Tom
Vladimir

Absent with regrets:

Nick
Sarah

1. Secretary
 - a. Approve Minutes – January 7, 2009 meeting

Motion by Katy to approve minutes

In favour: Unanimous

Motion passed

2. President
 - a. Traill/Trend
 - i. Liquor license is still under negotiation
 - b. Discrimination and Harassment Policy
 - i. Sherry Taylor will present to the GSA at the next meeting; please familiarize yourselves with the policy beforehand.
 - c. New office – new keys have arrived! Currently, Nina, Jean, and Tom have keys. We will be moving office to Wallace Hall 303 after the meeting.
 - d. Meeting time – Nick is unable to make this time. Meeting time will likely not change, but an e-mail will nonetheless be sent to Nick asking him if there are any other available times.
 - e. English rep, Deborah Harkness, just resigned. Need to recruit new reps.
3. VP – CASSC meeting update.
 - a. Bus stop situation was discussed. A concrete decision is yet to be reached.
 - i. CASSC has sent a letter to Peterborough Transit regarding the dangers of having the Traill bus stop in its current location.
 - b. Charter will come into effect next September due to delay in revisions.
 - c. Food and housing committee:

- i. Overhead costs: resident students now pay \$700-1000. Aramark stated that there is no chance this amount will change and is putting a moratorium on the issue to stem future complaints.
 - ii. Food costs would be less if there were fewer cafeterias. The four cafeterias at Trent are under different plans, Aramark prefers the new plan. Therefore, amalgamating the cafeterias into one could be complicated.
 - iii. There will be a food recommendation meeting in March. Anyone interested in particular food items/changes should attend. Ask Jenn for further details if interested.
- 4. Treasurer – conference bursaries are completed. Likely will go over budget. No one will be rejected.
 - a. Application for group and conference support. A large budget was set aside, equal to that set aside for Symon’s (\$5000). Last year, the GSA had to turn applicants away with a \$2000 budget. This year, however, there was only one application (“Conversations with Darwin”).

Motion by Nina to grant \$1500 to “Conversations with Darwin” conference.

Seconded: John

In favour: unanimous

Motion passed

Motion by John to re-open submissions for conference funding until February 28th

Seconded: Nina

In favour: Unanimous

Motion passed

- 5. Communications
 - a. Website hosting – the GSA is now signed up with Host Papa, through trentgsa.ca. \$225 for 3 yr contract.
 - b. Website –new website not online yet. It will be redirected through the Trent website. The new domain name will be added to the redirect file, this will be good for searching purposes as well since the website will pop up on google searches.
 - c. Website updating – the graduate student handbook will be the most difficult to update as there is a lot of information on the constitution that is not up to date. The constitution need not even be included.
- 6. Senator – Grad Studies Committee meeting update
 - a. New medals were proposed for grad students: these would involve the same criteria as the Governor General medal, only there will be four to represent a broader range of programs.
 - b. Teaching Assistants:
 - i. A proposal was made to introduce RA positions. Perhaps there can be a guarantee of at least one year GTA experience for grad students. Giving preferential choice to second year students may

not be optimal as the whole point of TAing is to provide a learning experience.

- ii. There was discussion that TAships present a weakness to the undergraduate program. The system needs improvement. The TAships should be assigned to specific qualifications of graduate students.
- iii. Another issue discussed was how to quantify TA workload. Accounting for hours worked may be best. There is concern that some TA's may be given disproportionate amount of marking over teaching responsibilities.

7. Social Directors

a. January events

- i. Pete's game – this Thursday (Jan. 22) at 7pm. Attendance is now more than 30!
- ii. Trivia night – next Thursday (Jan. 29) at the Trend at 7pm. Teams will be formed on arrival. Food will be provided with beer supplied by the Republican. This event will be funded by Grad Studies. Faculty should be encouraged to go. GSA will send out an e-mail to all department secretaries. February event – Band at The Trend
- iii. Open mike night – this is a possibility but funds need to be figured out for renting/buying equipment.
- iv. Other ideas: Karaoke night? Rock band night?
- v. Lighting at the Trend is still an issue. A work order has been submitted, but no action as of yet. Allison will send an e-mail inquiring about this.
- vi. Miscellaneous: the social budget needs to be spent: Massively fun activities are possible, mini golf may be one.
- vii. Suggestion: plan a pub night after Symon's Series. This would increase social networking since most attendees leave right after the series is over. Conference services could be present for an hour or so after the series.

8. CUPE rep – update on statement by Sid Ryan

- a. The statement made at the last GSA meeting regarding the GSA's stance on this issue was brought to the CUPE meeting.
- b. CUPE has composed a letter to Sid Ryan, which supports and expands upon the GSA's position, but also takes a very clear stance on the situation in Israel and Palestine and so was different than the GSA's motion in this respect. There was discussion as to whether the GSA should add our name to the letter, but decided against this. The GSA has informed CUPE of their stance on the issue so it will be laid to rest.
- c. The CUPE website has posted a lot of information on the incident, among this a formal apology by Sid Ryan repositioning his stance on the issue. The issue is still up for debate at the next CUPE National meeting.

9. Sub-committee reports back

- a. Constitution (Jenn, Katy, Lynette)

- i. Commissioner position – agreed that for now this position should be kept as one rather than two separate positions. This issue will be further discussed when the position is further defined.
- ii. Executive restructure (reps etc)
 - 1. Election process and first year rep:
 - a. Questions: How would a first year rep be elected? Should there be a formal voting system for this position?
 - b. Voting: Could be voted through a physical ballot. Position could be advertised at intro week with an election being held at one of the activities
Comment: This might not provide enough time for new students to become familiar with the GSA.
 - c. Eligibility: Perhaps the position should be a second year student. However, a first year student would represent a more accurate perspective of a first year position and would better help increase interest and awareness in the GSA from first years.
 - d. Tenure timeline: Could perhaps be a January to January position. However, this would not allow for any reps to hold any executive positions in the next year.
 - 2. As the student body grows, the GSA will also grow and may be split into separate associations for each Arts and Science programs. There should be a system in place to account for the possibility of this split. It should follow a pyramid structure. With current restructuring, we are adding reps. However, because only core reps will be required to attend, then the process will be more streamlined.
 - 3. Minimizing the number of bodies – why not make program reps the executive? This could introduce voting conflicts and also may be difficult to match representation.
 - 4. Need to figure out how to include reps so that they are actively represented, so they are not just a “presence” at meetings.
 - 5. The swing position – if all humanities are voted in as the Exec or vice versa, this does not make for a very democratic association. The swing vote would address this issue. Is there really such a need for the position to take a side? One could debate that for the past 20 years, there has been a flip flop with one department being more represented over the other.
 - 6. Fall election: There should be a cut-off date for people being nominated.
- b. Health Care (Allison, Jean, Josh)

- i. Meeting with Doug on Wednesday (Jan. 21) at 4pm. Nina will send information from previous year.
- c. Student funding, fees, tuition (Tom - Chair, Vladimir, Jean, John, Colin)
 - 1. Nina pulled off the committee since Jean represents similar interests. Also, Nina will not be present for much longer and so would like to limit commitments as much as possible.
 - ii. Tom's letter to ENLS - will be kept as sensitive information for now until the GSA reaches an agreement on final changes

Motion by Tom: The GSA endorses his letter in association with students in the Environmental and Life Sciences program.

Seconded: Andrea

In favour: 11

Abstention: 1

Motion passed

- d. Symon's Series (Tom)
 - i. Still waiting for April 1st confirmation. All other speakers confirmed.
 - ii. Next series will be Wednesday, Feb. 4. Speakers will be Natalie Thornhill (Humanities) Andrea Coombs (Science).

10. Next meeting – Monday February 2, 2009 – 4-6pm, Champlain SCR.

11. Other business

- a. Thanks to the dedication of program reps so far. Their input is appreciated.
- b. Elections are fast approaching! Perhaps there should be a pamphlet/brochure/newsletter about GSA positions. Needs to happen soon. It would be very useful and informative. GSA members need to send out a blurb about their position to Josh within two weeks (approximately 50 words, 4 to 5 sentences). Also send any GSA event pictures that are not on the website.

Motion by Andrea to adjourn

Seconded: Allison

In favour: Unanimous

Meeting adjourned