

## **GSA MEETING AGENDA – Monday, March 8, 2010 – The Crypt**

### *Present*

Lindsay Thomson – President  
Shera Birnbaum – VP Finance  
Rathika Balthasar – VP Student Affairs (Science)  
Julia Lane – VP Student Affairs (Arts)  
Andrew Farnsworth – VP Executive Affairs  
John Franey – VP Communications  
Rachel Herron - Arts Liaison  
Kim Wilson– CUPE Representative  
Alison McDonald – Environment Commissioner  
Carling Beninger - First Year Representative  
Lisa Pollock– VP Operations

### *Absent with regards*

Kaitlin Breton-Honeyman – Senator  
Stephen Oni – Science Liaison  
Kelly Woodley – Human Rights Commissioner

#### 1. VP Student Affairs

- a. Spring Fling will be held on Saturday April 24, 2010 at Splice. In previous years, this event was held at the Gordon Best Theater. However, due to the new accessibility rules, it has been moved to Splice as it is fully accessible to all persons. Admission is \$5/person or a food donation. There is no cost for booking Splice, so the expense for the GSA will be for food. A graduate student DJ is needed for the Spring Fling.
- b. The Symons Seminar Series Gala will be held on Friday April 16, 2010 at the Canoe Museum.
- c. There are two options for the March social event: glow in the dark mini-putt or laser tag. This event will be in addition to the environmental event organized by Alison. Mini golf would cost \$5/graduate student and laser tag a little more than \$5 per student. This mystery event will occur on Monday March 22, 2010 at 7pm.
- d. Environmental event– The Early Earth Day event will be held this Thursday March 11, 2010 from 10-4pm. There will be booths from local environmental organizations. The GSA is providing \$50 for snack foods from The Season Spoon for this event.

#### 2. VP Finance

- a. Student Ancillary Fees – The sub-committee of CASSC, which deals with ancillary budgets, met recently where budgets were presented and voted on. At the next CASSC meeting, Andy will vote in order to approve and check Shera's vote.
  - i. The Wellness Fee - 12% of this is allotted for counseling services and to a large extent health services. The GSA is required to vote on an

increase/decrease of an ancillary fee. The Trent wellness fee is requesting a \$1 fee increase. Trent University asked for all budgets to be cut by 5%. In order to make up for this, the Wellness Fee wants a \$1 increase, providing an extra \$6000. The 5% cut also results in 170 hours of the counseling program being eliminated. If the wellness fee requested a \$2 increase of ancillary fees, they would not need to cut hours. The reason they are asking for \$1 only is because they feel like students should not be responsible for paying for the cuts. Shera is in support of \$2 fee since she feels it is unfair to students to cut 170 counseling hours.

Motion to approve \$2 increase of wellness ancillary fees: by Julia

Seconded: by Rathika

Voted: 8 voted, 0 abstained

Motion approved

- ii. Conference services – Graduate students do not pay ancillary fees towards this budget but they can absorb the 5% decrease without changes.
- iii. Disability services – This service gave a 4-year budget. We cannot vote for or against this budget but can make suggestions. The largest cut they presented was to non-salary expenses. Savings are due to new staff receiving a lower amount of money for benefits than long-term staff members would. External proctoring exam expenses will be cut by \$8000. The technology budget will also be cut by \$18000 (from non-salary expenses), resulting in limiting collaboration with others and availability of new technology for people with disabilities.
- iv. Academic Skills/Peer Mentoring /Career Center – There needs to be a total of 5% cut from the budget.
  1. Academic skills – There is an increase in student traffic but have discontinued the help booklets in print regarding writing skills etc. and are being converted to on-line versions. They also have made cuts to part-time employees, with employees specializing in certain subjects (i.e. Math expert) being reduced. The GSA does not support discontinuing conversions to on-line booklets and suggests transferring funds to this service from print material costs.
  2. Mentoring – The mentoring program is an under used service as there are few matches between students who are mentors and ones who need mentoring. The mentoring program is being cut by 80%. The GSA believes, instead of matching mentors and students on a course specific basis, they should increase the flexibility by assigning mentors on a department wide basis.
  3. Career center – This budget is being cut by 1%, making it the smallest budget decrease out of the 5% cut. The cuts to this budget will prevent professional networking events and the

purchase of a new job posting board.

Motion to not support budget: by Andy

Seconded: by Julia

Voted: 8 voted, 0 abstained

Motion approved

4. Health Services Ancillary fees – Health services are requesting that student ancillary fees be increased by \$6.50 to account for the 5% cut. This value is based on an already limited staff and wages. Currently there is one full time health secretary. Doctor's salaries are below the average of doctors employed at comparable facilities. With full time staff salaries being unable to change, only part-time casualties will be affected by the fee increase. Non-staff related expenses include travel, photocopying, advertising and laundry. Each of these expenses are being reduced or eliminated excluding travel expenses. However, some elements are being increased. Health services claim that due to cases becoming increasingly complex, more time is required for each patient, which results in a higher salary for doctors. The goal of the student ancillary fee increase is the cover the cost of adding 2-day clinic sessions (with one evening one being eliminated). There are currently 7 clinics per week and by adding one more, administration wages will also increase. The number of students using the clinic has not increased but the needs of the students have changed.

Motion to not support the \$6.50 ancillary fee increase for health services:  
by Andy

Due to the recommendations not considering graduate students (i.e. establishing summer hours), the GSA cannot support the fee increase. With the issue being increased appointment time and not increased number of students, we feel that being informed why appointments are taking longer is essential to understand the need for the fee increase.

Seconded: by Julia

Voted: 7 voted, 0 abstained

Motion approved

Motion for alternative ancillary fee increase of \$3.25 for 1 clinic (still a 7% increase of budget): by Rathika

Seconded: by Andy

Voted: 7 voted, 0 abstained

Motion approved

- b. Dean of Grad Studies/Head of Traill College – The GSA discussed the candidates for this position based perceptions from the lunch meetings attended with the candidates: Joan (History professor), Daniel (Quebec –

Forestry professor) and Jane from Brock University. The offer of employment will be sent on Monday March 15, 2010.

3. VP Executive Affairs
  - a. CASSC meeting – The Trent athletic center will be closed all summer beginning at end of April. There will be no refund for student since there is not a decrease in activities offered.
  - b. New campus card – There is discussion about having one student card that includes access to everything.
  - c. GSA Elections – There will be 1 week of nominations (March 19-26), 1 week of campaigning (Mar 26-April 2) followed by a WebCT vote (April 2 – 9, 2010) by the graduate student body.
4. The Trend – There are still many student complaints about the Trend and the Sunrise Café. The GSA feels that having a student committee to consult with Chef Daniel could help to improve these issues.
  - a. The Traill College Committee is to act on behalf of dean (composed of students and faculty). The committee should be given power to enforce student concerns with the Trend. Trent will not renew Chef Daniel's contract without the GSA's recommendation. One previous student concern brought to our attention was that no menu or pricing was provided at the Sunrise Café in the Trend. A menu has now been posted but no prices are displayed. All student comments/suggestions concerning the Trend should be compiled and taken into account before establishing a new contract with Chef Daniel. A suggestion to include consultation with a student committee as requirement of any new contract was put forward.

Motion to end meeting: by Lisa

Seconded: by Julia

Meeting adjourned