General Council Meeting  
Wednesday, 13 May 2015, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
Student Union, Pima Room

I. Call to Order  
At 4:06 pm  
Attendance: Juhyung Sun, Mariia Khorosheva, Joy Veluz, Trudie McEvoy, Jared Brock, Sarah Netherton, Alexander Karaman, Jasmine Sears, Kate Chisholm, Sierra Fung, Cari Tusing, Justin Ostrowski, Usir Younis (proxy by Sierra Fung), James Daniel Carlson (proxy by Jasmine Sears), Mark Ryan (proxy by Sarah Netherton), Delaney Stratton (via Skype), Chandni Parikh (via Skype)  
Non-voting members: Deya Nevarez Martinez

II. Call to Audience  
S. Netherton: I would like to start each GPSC meeting with a breathing exercise. On the count of 4-7-8, we will inhale- hold our breath – exhale.

III. Approvals  
Minutes: April 22, 2015  
Vote: 17 for, 0 opposed, 1 abstain

IV. New Business  
a. Summer Budget – J. Brock  
i. J. Brock: I haven’t met with Sarah yet to discuss the new GPSC budget due to finals. I will let everyone know when this happens.  
ii. S. Netherton: Do the August trips need to be included in the budget?  
iii. J. Sun: Yes.  
   a. The NAGPS Leadership Summit will be held in New York from August 1-5. During the summit, you can learn some leadership tips and attend some useful sessions. Are any of you interested? You’ll learn a lot. If you’re interested, please email me, and we’ll include this into the budget. We will have several rooms in the hotel, so if you want to come, you can.  
iv. A. Karaman: Can anyone come?  
v. J. Sun: Yes.  
vi. J. Brock: What other expense are there? Are we doing International Student pickup?  
vii. D. Martinez: Yes, we are. We will also have the new student orientation. In addition, we need to reserve money for the Marketing Administrator, and similar types of things.  
viii. J. Brock: So we need the budget to include travel expenses, Sara's trips, the Conference, Graduate Orientation Events, Marketing costs, and the International Student Pickup. Is there anything else that needs to be included?  
ix. D. Nevarez Martinez: Marketing supplies also needs to be included in the budget.  
x. J. Sears: We need to have the budget created so we can have an email vote.
xi. **J. Brock:** Ok, I will look at last year’s budget and create the new budget.

b. Pharmacy Ph.D. Elections Code Amendment – J. Sears

i. **J. Sears:** The Reps from Pharm PhD want to have an internal process for assigning reps.

ii. **A. Karaman:** So we want the internal elections process to match the external process?

iii. **J. Sears:** These students want to go back to having an internal elections process.

iv. **D. Nevarez Martinez:** They want to be able to choose their Representatives internally. Some other colleges already choose their reps internally.

v. **A. Karaman:** So the text proposed for the Pharmacy PhD. internal elections structure is the same as for those other colleges?

vi. **D. Nevarez Martinez:** This is the same text we have for some other schools. We just substituted the name in the text for Pharmacy Phd.

vii. **J. Sears:** This agenda item comes from the elections commissioner.

**Vote: 15 for, 0 opposed, 3 abstain**

c. UA News Survey – J. Sears

i. **J. Sears:** If you got added to the UA News mailing list, you will get news about the University and access to different university stories. I can email this link.

   1. We would like graduate students to take the UA News survey to see how useful it is. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. Please sort through what is relevant and irrelevant for you.
   2. The person in charge of UA News can come in during one of our GPSC meetings and talk.

d. **A. Karaman:** What is the purpose of the survey? To promote the University?

e. **J. Sears:** Yes, it is.

V. **Staff Reports**

a. Program Coordinator – D. Nevarez Martinez

i. **D. Nevarez Martinez:** Our new GPSC website is moving along and will be done soon. We have actually heard that the website is ready, we just don’t have the link yet. Hopefully, we will be getting something better than what we have, especially for the pages that require the use of sensitive information.

ii. **J. Sears:** Have you heard anything from Isoken yet?

iii. **D. Nevarez Martinez:** No, but we are hiring for 7 new positions.

iv. **A Karaman:** Are all the positions for Graduate Students?

v. **D. Nevarez Martinez:** Yes.

   1. We have divided one of the positions we currently have in GPSC into two.
   2. Please email anyone who could be interested in all the positions we are hiring for. These positions require graduate student to be in good standing.
   3. However, the positions do not interfere with the ERE, so you can do them even if you have a GA position.

vi. **J. Sears:** Are there any questions for Deya?
VI. **Representative Reports**

i. **J. Sears:** Are there any Representative Reports?

ii. **C. Tusing:** The way the ERE is calculated for graduate and professional students, specifically those with research assistantships, is changing. Now the ERE is calculated differently, which is good for some colleges and bad for others.

   1. Both Health Care and Tuition Remissions used to be given to GAs, now only some percentage of the health care is covered.
   2. The responsibility of paying for the cost of GAs is shifting from the graduate college to individual grant holders. All professors who offer assistantships are now paying a 63.6% tax on student salary. On top of that, the College has to pay a 50% overhead to the university for having the grant. This is a lot of money of money, and a big concern.
   3. For the grant holders, it is becoming cheaper to hire someone now for a 0.5 FTE instead of a 0.25. It now makes more sense for departments to hire a graduate student at a 0.5 FTE. This is not 100% finalized, but this is sort of what I think the situation will look like. I would like to find out how your colleges are reacting.
   4. Only graduate college wages used to show up on the pay stub, now graduate college benefits and remissions will show up on the pay stub as well. I’m concerned what this could mean for tax purposes. Will we now have to pay taxes on the benefits we receive?

iii. **J. Sears:** No, we won’t have to pay taxes on the benefits and remission. But our benefits and remissions could show up on the W-2 form.

iv. **A. Karaman:** We may be disqualified from government benefits since our tuition remission will be counted as part of our earnings.

v. **C. Tusing:** This pay stub policy could apply to all Graduate students.

vi. **A. Karaman:** For long term research assistants this is a concerning budgetary scenario.

vii. **J. Sun:** My recommendation is that you describe all of these concerns in an email. We have at least 3 points of contact who we can schedule meetings with regarding this.

viii. **C. Tusing:** I have talked to the financial offices at my department. If any of you go to business offices in your departments, they will by able to tell you how this scenario works out.

ix. **J. Sun:** We can talk to other people too, including the Provost.

x. **C. Tusing:** Maybe we can write a letter to the Provost explaining our concerns regarding student wages. I can create a letter. If you want, I can also write a couple of paragraphs about student wages. We can discuss the letter and vote.

xi. **J. Sears:** These are all valid guesses, but we weren’t warned about any of this. It would be great to let people know we want to be notified ahead of time so we can become involved.
xii. **C. Tusing:** We should have been involved a year ago. But the business office received notice of this a week ago.

xiii. **S. Netherton:** Yes, we got news of this on May 7.

xiv. **J. Sun:** I suspect that not only graduate students will be upset about this.

xv. **C. Tusing:** Yes, now professors can't hire at a 0.25 FTE. We have until July to figure out what we can do.

**VII. Officer Reports**

a. **President – S. Netherton**

   **S. Netherton:** I mostly have been talking to and learning about people on campus.
   1. I'm currently working on fee transparency, this should be resolved before the beginning of summer. All the department fees should be presented on their websites.
   2. The university fees committee has been at times difficult, but now we are allowed to take notes and I am given copies of all the documents before the meetings. So this has been good. Meetings will continue over summer and I'll be there.
   3. We're trying to get ready for Fall, will be doing lots of important legislative work at the state capitol. People are expecting state funding to disappear soon completely, though this could take up to 15 years.

b. **Vice President – J. Sun**

   i. **J. Sun:** The ITSAB is an extremely important committee and they just had their end of the year mixer.
   
   1. The IT fee used to be the black box fee, which meant we did not know where it was going. We are working on getting the fee breakup for the past 2 year. I'll need to train my prodigy regarding ITSAB, as I'll probably be a one term vice president.
   2. I want our work in GPSC this year to be less focused on sending out emails and readable spam, but going out to all departments and trying to integrate ourselves into their workflow. It seems like every graduate student government around the US is hitting a wall and we consider ourselves lucky if we get a 3.5% student engagement.
   3. Sometimes people may enter GPSC and not even know who to contact in their departments. We should have an institutional memory. This could help us contact the departments themselves, not just communicate at the general University level. This method could be more effective.
   4. I am working on this and any suggestions are welcome. We will see if this method works, many aspects still need to be thought of.

ii. **A. Karaman:** Why should we try to reach the departments themselves? To get more applications for Research and Travel grants?

iii. **J. Sears:** It is important to make sure students are aware of what they can do at graduate school, and this goes for other things besides grants. For example, setting up
workshops inside colleges would be awesome and people could be more interested in this than in general GPSC events.

iv. **D. Nevarez Martinez:** We could also have a more standardized process for receiving student grievances.

v. **C. Tusing:** Don’t we have a OMBUDs office?

vi. **D. Nevarez Martinez:** Yes, we do, but a lot of students don’t know who to contact. So perhaps we can have a space on our website where we can receive student grievances so that we can direct students to the necessary office.

vii. **S. Netherton:** We have connections with three other state universities, but we can’t seem to get enough student signatures on petitions or have students show up at the capitol. I think better student engagement is important for a multitude of purposes.

viii. **A. Karaman:** We should think of the diverse of things we offer. It is important to contact people, but if what we do doesn’t work, a lot of students write GPSC off. We need to make sure we are creating a huge diversity of programs. By expanding on that, we can have people looking to have services brought to our attention. Having customized workshops will mean that we are getting people interested.

ix. **C. Tusing:** Another idea is to have all the student governments meet with GPSC. Sometimes student governments inside departments don’t know what GPSC is doing.

x. **D. Nevarez Martinez:** I want to talk about the usefulness of our listserve.

1. I was surprised at the amount of people that do read the newsletter we send out. There are weeks on end that we don’t get any requests from students who want to be unsubscribed.
2. The Spring fling tickets we advertised through our listserve had 100 people come.
3. If you give us more content to add to our newsletter, we could add it.

xi. **S. Fung:** I am president of a student organization in Pharmacy. Maybe everyone could help their department organizations partner with other organizations and other presidents.

xii. **J. Sears:** Collaboration with other departments and organization is important for sure, and we should try to continue all our successful partnerships.

xiii. **J. Sun:** A lot of the process of creating the communication with departments will be figuring out their power structure and seeing how students are organized department by department.

1. It is equally important to collaborate with the student organizations to see what issues they face and help them resolve them together. It will be a lot of work.
2. I agree with Deya, the listserve is working great. But if we want to do even better than this, we should also try out other means.

xiv. **S. Netherton:** We do get student government leaders together once in a while. But even for them, their interests and concerns are very diverse and sometimes disconnected.
C. Tusing: Alex and Kate visited all the student governments within SBSS and it was extremely successful.

S. Netherton: I think we need your guys to help at each college. When I contacted the colleges, the only 3 names I got for SBSS are your three names. We need to make sure that when you graduate, we have a list of contact names created.

D. Nevarez Martinez: Yes, we need the reps to make a list of all student governments in their college. I used to go through the ASUA list looking for graduate student organizations.

J. Sears: But not all of the names are there.

T. McEvoy: Who is going to be the keeper of this information?

J. Sun: I will.

T. McEvoy: So should I pass on all the contact names to you?

J. Sun: Yes, the idea is the Vice President will have all the information.

A. Karaman: I’m concerned that there is a lot of motivation at the top GPSC level.

1. But without the individual reps working with you to make this happen, it could be a frustrating process that could come even to an end.

2. Maybe we should map this out as a requirement, so that GPSC representatives can work towards it throughout the semesters.

J. Sun: My answer is yes, the idea is that reps should shoulder all that work. But it is hard to say anything more before I start the process.

A. Karaman: Is there any way of making this transparent, to see who isn’t doing any work?

D. Nevarez Martinez: Transparency is the reason why we have representative reports. This process will just mean going further.

C. Tusing: I never saw any of the previous representative reports.

D. Nevarez Martinez: A shared the representative reports folder with Allen.

J. Sears: Can this folder be shared with all the representatives?

D. Nevarez Martinez: The folder is huge. However, I can email the reports to individual representatives. The year I was the Chief of Staff, I sent the Rep reports instead of Iman.

S. Netherton: I am hoping we can have an Internal and External vice president next year.

c. Assembly Chair – J. Sears

J. Sears: I won’t be here during summer, so the Vice President will be organizing the meetings.

d. Treasurer – J. Brock

J. Brock: We had a faculty senate. They confirmed 2 new graduate programs. The MA of public policy was approved. I have nothing else to report.

e. Secretary – M. Khorosheva

i. M. Khorosheva: I also won’t be here for some of the summer meetings as I will be abroad for some time.

ii. A. Karaman: I think we need an excused absence policy.
iii. **D. Nevarez Martinez:** We can't force people to go to meetings if they need to go to a class at that same time, or have other important reasons to be excused.

iv. **J. Sears:** This year, there were some people who couldn’t make the GPSC meetings and they are still getting their stipend.

v. **J. Brock:** We all have plenty of reasons to be excused from meetings, but we can’t all be absent. If there are any significant issues related to absences, we can figure them out at EB meetings. But I agree with sentiment, if you need to be at conference and can’t make a meeting, that is fine.

vi. **J. Sears:** Were good for now, but keep your eyes open for the email vote.

f. Social Chair – J. Veluz

VIII. Updates

IX. Other Business

X. Call to Adjourn

At 5:12