

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA. GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT COUNCIL

General Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 4, 2009

Meeting called to order at 6:05pm by Bridget Barker

Present: Stephen Bieda, Bridget Barker, Alison Betts, Jill Burris, Tim Chambers, Jim Collins, Mabel Crescioni, Roeland Hancock, Robert Jacobi, James Johnson, A. Quadir Khan, Stephanie Levitt, David Lopez-Negrete, Helena Morrison, Sandra Nemeth, Sarah Smith, David Talenfeld.

Proxies: Boris Glebov, Sanket Unhale, Eirin Bareis, Erica Cirillo-McCarthy, Emily Connally, Tiffany Goforth, Jennifer Kruse, Tiffany Goforth, Chizanya Mpinja, Brittany Perkins, Kunal Ramani, Lauren Sekora.

I. **Call to Audience** – None

II. **Officer Reports**

President - Stephen Bieda

Stephen notified the Council that Secretary Emily Connally is absent due to a personal crisis. Regarding the President's Memo, Stephen urged the graduate & Professional student population to remain engaged. Stephen also urged members to attend Thursday's Democratic Budget Meeting in Tucson. We are the eyes and ears for the graduate & professional student population. We need to ensure that the information being heard is true, as opposed to rumor or hearsay.

The incoming date for the new Council has been moved up to April 15, instead of first Sunday in May. This was necessary due to the political climate of the University.

Vice President - Boris Glebov

Stephen reported for Boris emphasizing a need for the Policy Committee to meet.

Assembly Chair - Bridget Barker

Deferred report.

Treasurer - Sanket Unhale

Absent.

Secretary - Interim Recorder

None. Stephen stated that we need a permanent Secretary in Connally's absence. We may need to elect new Secretary on an interim basis.

Social Chair

This position is open. Stephen asked members of the Social Committee concerning an Interim Chair before appointing Erica-Cirillo McCarthy as the Interim Chair.

III. Director and Representative Reports

A. Quadir Khan – Graduate Council stated that if a student is admitted, whether provisionally or otherwise, you are here to stay. The 3.25 GPA requirement for provisional students has been tossed.

IV. Questions for Officer, Representative and Director Reports

Q: Robert Jacobi – Asked whether TA furloughs are not being discussed by Shelton?

A: Stephen Bieda – Indeed the President was asked about TA furloughs, but was unable to commit. The student employees affected would be undergraduate.

V. Reading and Approval of Minutes

Jan 22, 2009 (attached) – Approved (No Discussion): Motioned by Tim Chambers, Seconded by Helena Morrison. 18 voted in favor with 4 abstentions.

Bridget Barker: Motion to move New Business of Health Care discussion and Library fee before Old Business. Seconded by Boris Glebov. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. New Business

- a. Student Health Insurance Catastrophic Drug Coverage (consider previous emails from past presidents, etc.) – Chizanya Mpinja

Remarks from discussion with Student Health Representatives – The first \$1000 are not covered, next \$1500 (80% covered), beyond first \$2500 (100%). In 2007-2008, there were 38 out of 5400 eligible persons who benefitted from this type of coverage. They benefitted to the order of \$82,000. \$6.50 per person, per month. \$180,000 paid in, benefit being received is less. Graduate college is paying 40% of graduate & professional student population. Regarding the Renewal process and ABOR Student Health Plan, ASU & NAU do not have this benefit. Could reduce amounts by 5.4% if jettisoned.

Recommendation: as individuals consume prescriptions, turn in to Student Health. Diabetic benefit pays for 90% of amount. Communication to the Student population is not very effective. Time of filing limit is 18 months. Can go back up to 18 months back to gain coverage. How about Student Health? Can submit each time, monthly or whenever. It's possible for on-campus student pharmacy to inform students.

Q: Helena Morrison – What is the feasibility of using catastrophic coverage as a stepping stone to more universal Rx coverage?

A: Given the budget, the likelihood that Rx coverage is coming is low. It greatly raises the premium. Exactly how much depends on the coverage, co-pay, and different variables. But, there are estimates of a 20 – 30 % increase in premiums in adding Rx coverage.

Q: Bridget Barker – How many people come close to the limit?

A: About 75 people submitted claims that didn't reach the deductible.

Motion to keep the catastrophic drug coverage plan by Robert Jacobi.

Friendly amendment by David Talenfeld – Propose to keep the coverage provided that the pharmacy notifies students when they reach their deductible.

Robert Jacobi: Improve communications? Not accepted as a friendly amendment.

David Talenfeld: Can we negotiate a reduced rate given that we are underutilizing the coverage?

Health representatives: Perhaps.

Motion to keep the drug coverage plan was seconded by Sarah Smith and passed with 12 ayes, 5 nays, and 5 abstentions.

b. Dean Stoffle – Proposal to increase library student fee.

Brief overview of contents of proposal. Library is looking at 15% cut minimum between now and July. What's changed? 1.5 million cut on operations side. 17-18 positions need to be eliminated. Loss of 38 positions since 2007. Acquisitions budget has not increased, so can't continue to fund some resources. 1.2 million/14% of the acquisitions budget. Over 400 responses so far on resources up for elimination.

In addition, we have added some health science titles. 0.5 million reduction on a 2 mil budget from HS acquisitions. That will impact the rest of the campus as well because the libraries buy together to leverage costs. HS resources include other things, like basic science resources. Things have gone from bad to worse.

Provost and President instructed library to look at fees other schools are charging. No indication that money will be available for the acquisitions any time soon. Library's proposal is based on looking at peer institutions. Queried members of the Association for Research Libraries. Data collection fairly informal.

Looked at many options, including closing Science Library. Holdings at the Fine Arts Library can be moved. Request for the fee would mean Fine Arts Library stays, fewer cuts in resources, adding resources, look at new services, digitize CCP, image collection. In essence, fee will eliminate need for drastic cuts and still provide student-centric services and more online material.

Q: David Talenfeld: What would an increase be that maintained services (as opposed to increasing services)?

Q: Robert Jacobi: Would a tuition increase be more useful than a fee, as a portion of the fee is pulled out for financial aid?

A: The portion to financial aid is mandated by the regents, but most of the fee does go to the library, as opposed to tuition that cannot be as clearly directed.

Q: Robert Jacobi: Might be good know what it would take to maintain services, as new services may not be feasible in the budget climate.

A: Library gathers input from focus groups, surveys, comments from students to identify new services.

Q: Sarah Smith: Clarify the amount of the increase. What will happen to the Fine Arts Library?

A: 25 student employees, 10 in CCP, 20 in special collections, 3.5 FTE library. Library will close. The expert librarians will move with the collection, but the staff will be cut.

Q: James Johnson: Looks like most of the fee is for improvement? What's the minimum needed to maintain service?

A: Not clear, but maybe about 3 of 5 million would maintain status quo. Keeps from having to come back in the near future for more funds.

Q: Jim Collins: Asked Helena about who can access the 17% that gets taken out from financial aid. Noted that non-degree students usually aren't eligible to receive those funds.

Q: Stephen Bieda: Can you explain about late fees?

A: Library only charges in rare cases.

Q: Helena Morrison: Surveys—do they ask not just what services do you want, but what would you be willing to pay for?

A: We look more at what needs are out there.

Q: Helena Morrison: That's an important question, to help people prioritize what they really want if they know they have to pay for it. Fee for maintaining services, but need more information about what services students really want. There is a risk of implementing a large fee that will never be rolled back. When things get better more money may be available, and the fee will remain.

A: Directed by the provost to look at what other libraries charge. Doesn't believe the climate will get better, and will look at what would be required just to maintain service for next two years.

Q: Sarah Smith: Fine Arts Library doesn't serve all fine arts.

A: That's true. Explained the inception of the library, which started as a music library. Considering a new library that would serve all of the arts. If a 50 mil donor comes through, there is a plan, but probably won't happen anytime soon.

Q: Alison Betts: Why are you not charging late fees?

A: Library is looking at all kinds of fees, and that is one, but in the past the library was not allowed to keep the fees.

Q: Robert Jacobi: Right now the library gets the library fee. Yes and \$19 M in state money.

Q: Jim Collins: The library has always been very understanding about late books in the past, and wouldn't want to see that change.

A: We don't want to nickel and dime students.

Helena Morrison, Stephanie Levitt and Sarah Smith were nominated to sit on the Library Advisory Committee.

VII. Committee Non-Consent Agenda

a. Travel Grants Amendments – Amanda Durbak

Came as a seconded motion from Appropriations Committee.¹ Approved: 22 in favor, 0 opposed, no abstentions.

¹ Proposal to Consider Travel Grant Applications After Travel Has Occurred:

Currently, the rules for GPSC Travel Grants state that the dates of travel must occur after the application deadline in order to be considered eligible for funding, and that students can apply as many times as they can up until travel occurs.

However, it has been brought to the GPSC's attention that many times a student may find out about an opportunity to go to a conference only a few weeks before the date of travel, and that this often occurs between the bi-monthly deadline for Travel Grants. For instance, if a student is notified of acceptance of a paper on October 5th to present at a conference on November 15th, that student would not have been aware of their need in time for the October 1st deadline, but would not be eligible for the December 1st deadline, as travel would have already occurred. Furthermore, even if the student had applied for the October 1st deadline on the chance that they would be accepted, it is most likely that the student would not be funded, as applicants that have already been accepted are given higher priority during judging.

To address this situation, I propose to allow students to apply both prior to the date of travel, as well as up to one month past the date of travel. This would allow students whose travel situations fall between Travel Grant months to have a chance of applying, but would also prevent students from taking advantage of the program by applying indefinite number of times until their travel was funded.

VIII. Old Business

a. GPSC Election 2009 – Stephen Bieda & Bridget Barker

Please run, or find someone to run in your spot.

b. UITS Google Gmail Contract – Jim Collins

Jim Collins: Motion to defer to next meeting. James Johnson seconded it and passed unanimously.

c. GPSA awards nominees, GPSA week – Jessica Gerlach & Bridget Barker

Costs have gone up for the lunch, so lunch has been scaled back a bit. T-shirts have also gone up. Have 13,000 budgeted, and all of that has been allocated at this point, most to the BBQ. We need to get creative and think of way to raise money. Outreach committee is working on, but would love input from the rest of the council.

d. Phoenix Budget Cut Protest: Bus Fee Transfer to ASUA, Discussion & Vote – Stephen Bieda

Stephen motioned that the Council enter Executive Session. Seconded by Tim Chambers. Motion passed without objection.

7:56 – Move to executive session. Leave executive session 8:15.

Stephen: Call to Question – Give ASUA \$500 with an explanation? 16 voted in favor, 6 abstentions, 3 nays.

IX. Call to Adjourn

Motion to adjourn passed unanimously at 8:17pm.