

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA. GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT COUNCIL

General Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 25, 2009

I. Meeting called to order at 6:09pm by Bridget Barker

Present: Bridget Barker, Stephen Bieda, Boris Glebov, Sanket Unhale, Erica Cirillo-McCarthy, Jim Collins, Mabel Crescioni, Robert Jacobi, James Johnson, David Lopez-Negrete, Helena Morrison, Lauren Sekora, Sarah Smith, David Talenfeld, Jessica Gerlach.

Proxies: Alison Betts, Tim Chambers, Tiffany Goforth, A. Quadir Khan, Jennifer Kruse, Stephanie Levitt, Chizanya Mpinja, Brittany Perkins.

II. Call to Audience

Chestalene Pintozzi – Director of Project Management & Assessment, University Libraries & Center for Creative Photography.

Ms. Pintozzi came to promote “LibQUAL+,” the UA Libraries and Center for Creative Photography’s annual survey on library service quality. LibQUAL+ is a rigorously tested web-based survey that helps libraries assess and improve library services. The goals of LibQUAL+ are to: 1) help libraries better understand user perceptions of library service quality; 2) collect and interpret library user feedback systematically over time; 3) provide libraries with comparable assessment information from peer institutions; 4) identify best practices in library service.

This survey will assess UA student, faculty, and staff expectations and perceptions of library service quality from March 30-April 20, 2009. The results will be used to measure progress in meeting user needs and identifying areas that may need improvement or new services.

Random samples have been drawn for UA undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and staff and an e-mail invitation will be sent on Monday March 30, 2009 to those in the sample groups. This year we are trying to increase the number of responses by also opening the survey to participation by others who may be interested but who do not receive an e-mail invitation.

If you would like to participate, go to www.library.arizona.edu/libqual/ It takes about 20 minutes on average to complete the survey. Please spread the word and contact if there are any questions.

III. Officer Reports

a. President - *Stephen Bieda III*

Fees – The number of fees has decreased but they are still substantial. Stephen recited the amounts of the fees. The Graduate College fee was dropped. There is also a fee waiver being discussed. It is moving towards favoring graduate students. There is a possible 50% remission of these fees. Roughly, there is the prospect of paying \$300. The administration is opposed to 100% fee remission due to the funds situation. Fee implementation will probably be a multi-year process.

Vision 20/20 plan has finally been passed. ABOR have passed it: lower cost options for graduate education will be pursued, etc. Basic tenet remains but legislature still trying to cut 40% UA budget and there is the problem of AZ not receiving federal stimulus money. The problem lies in the Access Program. The Governor's office is working on resolving this so we can receive the stimulus money.

The State budget is running a \$500M deficit for FY '09. State receipts of taxes have decreased. There is the possibility that UA is not funded during June '09; so they will work on floating the UA during that period; it's a common practice. For FY 10, there is a \$3.1bn shortfall anticipated. \$1.2bn stimulus expected; 2/3 dispensed immediately. It's only one-time money so the administration doesn't expect exiting fiscal crisis until 2012.

Transformation process bearing some fruit. Rest of report on this topic deferred.

ASUA-GPSC – the discussion will now include Melissa Vito, Dr. Velez. We hope to resolve this issue. It seems Bruce is still hostile to stop representing grads. ASUA is facing negative press over election fall-out. Having an ASUA liaison next year is strongly recommended.

b. Vice President - *Boris Glebov*

Fees SPBAC meeting – a proposal emerged to use the stimulus money to cover fees. Hopefully this will offset the fees by 50%. It would show the stimulus is going to work directly for the people. Bill Crist at meeting, said the Med School in Phoenix won't be closed. Bad news: might get another mid-yr cut and a tuition surcharge of around \$1000. Possibly another \$2000 in tuition and fees next year.

c. Assembly Chair - *Bridget Barker*

Grad Program Assessment Committee – it has gone from a 6mos to a 6 week process. Deans have a week and a half to produce assessment of their program. The data may be turn out to be unreliable because of the short timeframe to produce the information. The committee did a ranking, which is available online at Grad College website; Bridget will email the link if you can't find it. Categories are: scholarship, effectiveness, inclusion (diversity). Rated as exceptional, strong, good, fair, restructure. A few were rated fair, none weak. Now this goes to the Provost; this committee doesn't make recommendations, it simply provides context.

GPSA week information deferred.

d. Treasurer - *Sanket Unhale*

Deferred.

e. Secretary - *David Lopez-Negrete*

No report.

f. Social Chair - *David Talenfeld*

Reminder that Wine Tasting is this Sat. Great music, the event is promoted on Facebook.

IV. Representative and Director Reports

Lauren Sekora– regarding Tech/Library Fees, she owns a Kindle and showed it to the Council so we could get a look at it.

Q: Boris Glebov: is the university still considering e-books?

A: Bridget Barker: yes, it's part of the laptop loan program.

James Johnson: several e-books are available to us.

Jim Collins – IT Fee Statement. The “targeting” requirement we listed is too vague, would like clearer answer on targeting. IT student advisory board wants to know what we support.

V. Questions for Officer, Representative and Director Reports

Q: Jim Collins: what are the prospects for the sunset provision, enrollment cap fees?

A: Stephen Bieda: so far no movement. Stephen wants to take a position statement endorsed by the full Council to Pres. Shelton.

Q: Robert Jacobi: does accepting the stimulus money require maintaining a specific education funding level?

A: Stephen Bieda: we can't drop funding below the FY '06 level. Otherwise, we risk losing the stimulus. The Governor wants to accept full stimulus but there is the healthcare Access Program and further cuts to worry about.

Q: Helena Morrison: on the 50% remission, is there a possibility of extending that to grant-holders?

A: Stephen Bieda: that came up in discussions. Extending to fellowships and grants possible but it looks like GAs are definitely covered. We are moving forward on including dissertation, fellowships, etc. We are continuing to negotiate.

Q: Helena Morrison: will stimulus money offset in or out of state students? How is the stimulus money working out state-by-state?

A: Stephen Bieda: there was no discussion on in/out of state discrimination.

VI. Reading and Approval of Minutes

a. February 4, 2009 – deferred. Will approve by email vote.

b. March 4, 2009 – Lauren clarified one of questions from the minutes. Stephen motioned to approve as amended. Robert seconded, which passed with two abstentions.

VII. Committee Non-Consent Agenda

a. Club/POD funding – Sanket Unhale

Q: Robert Jacobi: sought clarification on the IPSF application's entertainment expense.

A: Sanket Unhale: the expense is for international dance groups performing at the event. It's open to everyone but ticketed. The Council has approved funding for a similar event last semester.

Q: Boris Glebov: what is the expected attendance?

A: Sanket Unhale: 50 people.

Sanket Unhale: notes he has a reservation funding purely entertainment events; WIO event is also like this.

Q: Robert Jacobi: expected attendance for WIO event?

A: James Johnson: 30 grads, 3 or 4 female undergrads.

Q: Helena Morrison: are we short on money?

A: Sanket Unhale: no.

Q: Boris Glebov: has funding increased since last year?

A: Sanket Unhale: appropriations committee has been conservative in approving applications. We've gone over the monthly allotment once.

Stephen Bieda: point of information—WIO rejected twice in the past.

Q: Helena Morrison: is it possible to write guidelines regarding not funding purely entertainment events?

A: Sanket Unhale: we are working on writing further guidelines on this point.

Bridget Barker: we should consider more specific language asking for educational value of events.

Q: Robert Jacobi: is the application from the department of Anthropology from graduate students?

A: Sanket Unhale: yes.

David Talenfeld: academic or professional always take precedence but we should still consider entertainment events where feasible.

Robert Jacobi: our funding should work for the benefit of the majority of grad students. E.g., GPSA week would benefit grad students as a whole.

Q: Jessica Gerlach: does the Letterpress event require fees or is it open to everyone? Both grad and undergrads seem to be part of it.

A: Sanket Unhale: this is unclear. We asked for an explanation on this before awarding the funding.

Robert Jacobi motioned to approve the funding except for entertainment aspects of WIO event. Jim Collins seconded the motion. 7 voted in favor, 8 opposed, 4 abstentions. Motion failed.

Bridget Barker motioned to approve funding as recommended by the Appropriations Committee. 14 voted in favor, 2 opposed, 4 abstentions. Motion passed.

VIII. Old Business

a. Google email contract – Jim Collins

A Google representative will be on campus on 4/9 and 4/10. Question whether we would like to meet with the rep.

Stephen Bieda: point of information—David Talenfeld and David Lopez-Negrete are attending the sessions.

Jim Collins: We'd save money if we outsourced the email. But, there are problems with the contracts (ASUA and general contract): these don't favor students by not providing adequate security and privacy settings. Google will use your email after graduating for making advertising searches. Email treated as confidential while a student but not after graduating. People should understand that they will give up a right to privacy by using the email after graduating. We should push for beneficial changes in the contract. It might not be possible, however, for Google to restrict the amount they scan by date.

Q: Boris Glebov: how does the data flow happen on the server? It would be a violation to give email information to a 3rd party, for example.

Lauren Sekora: concerns over privacy might be overly sensitive. Intercepting data is already easy and students are already using Gmail. I strongly endorse making the switch.

Jim Collins: one student athlete's grades were leaked even if they were confidential.

[The Council discussed the pros and cons of Google contract and privacy concerns.]

Bridget Barker: GPSC should educate students about the risks because we have already voted for it.

Jim Collins motioned to endorse the Google contract with Robert Jacobi's friendly amendment about demanding student's confidentiality concerns are addressed. The motion passed with 1 abstention.

b. GPSA week volunteer update -- Jessica Gerlach/Bridget Barker

Please distribute flyers for the activities happening. We still need volunteers for Family Fun Day, Breakfast, and BBQ.

Q: David Talenfeld: can we increase spending on GPSA from surplus we have? How will we screen for undergrads?

A: one idea is to have voting at entrance, maybe providing raffle ticket. Maybe swiping CatCards.

Stephen Bieda: CatCard doesn't provide info on grad student.

[The Council discussed how to ensure identifying graduate students; getting laptops from library for voting. Bridget and Jessica will look into this.]

Come to the BBQ and please help.

Stephen Bieda motioned to direct \$2000 from our POD funding for the BBQ. Sanket Unhale seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

c. Fee statement -- Policy and Appropriations Committee

There is a concern that fees are being used for everything.

[The Council discussed the effectiveness of the language in the statement Policy and Appropriations produced.]

Mabel Crescioni: one suggestion is to ask administration to provide evidence of extraordinary need for the fees.

Helena Morrison: getting a showing of how much students/faculty are bearing burden of budget cuts would be useful.

Boris Glebov: furloughs are supposed to provide \$10M, whereas fees over \$20M.

Erica Cirillo-McCarthy: if the University can show extraordinary need through budget deficit, at least we should ask for a transparent statement of what they fee goes for.

Stephen Bieda motion to approve bullets 2-6 of the statement so he can present it to President Shelton, while the Council can continue to work on bullet 1. Erica Cirillo-McCarthy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

IX. New Business

a. Transformation Updates – Stephen Bieda

Stephen listed programs approved and consolidated in Transformation process. These have passed 75% threshold and don't need to go to faculty senate. They will be announced formally at faculty senate.

b. GRO policy – Stephen Bieda

Graduate students will now not be able to use the Grade Replacement Option. This will be debated at faculty senate in May

Q: Erica Cirillo-McCarthy: How many grad students use GRO?

A: Stephen Bieda: it's in the low single digits.

Boris Glebov: it's an extensive process to obtain it.

Jim Collins: grad students weren't able to use GRO in the past. We should extend timeframe to allow grad students to know about this. Students expecting GRO will lose out if it goes away.

Boris Glebov: this appears to be a punitive measure against students. It helps students who need it and there probably isn't abuse.

Q: Helena Morrison: what is the rationale for the policy change?

Q: Stephen Bieda: undergraduate abuse, none for graduates specifically.

Q: David Talenfeld: what is the time limit for applying for GRO?

A: Stephen: there's no time limit if it's the same class.

David Talenfeld: we should get the rationale and get present grad students grandfathered-in.

Stephen Bieda: we will raise this issue at faculty senate this Friday.

Jim Collins: graduate students are probably not abusing this policy. Jim knows of instances of students using it well.

Bridget barker: Graduate Council has approved permanent incomplete. This may have been part of the puzzle.

Lauren Sekora: if policy was to free up seats and a low number of grads are using it, it doesn't make sense.

Stephen Bieda: let's get hard numbers on this.

James Johnson: maybe it's because of grad students taking undergrad courses and vice versa.

Mabel Crescioni: it would be useful to find out other schools' policy on this.
Bridget Barker: this may be a way to up our standards.

c. Workload Survey – Boris Glebov

This survey is done every two years to measure how much work grad students actually do and where it goes. Boris would like feedback on the structure and questions. Specifically, on question 7.

Q: Robert Jacobi: what do we want to find out?

A: what their activities actually are.

David Lopez-Negrete motioned to have the Council provide feedback electronically by Wed. Boris seconded the motion, which passed.

X. Call to Adjourn

Stephen motioned to adjourn. Boris seconded, which passed unanimously at 8:16pm.