GSA General Council Meeting Minutes

December 5, 2001

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm.

I. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from November 7, 2001, meeting were approved. Edward Collins moved, and Kathy Meyer seconded. Adopted by unanimous consent.

II. Approval of Agenda

Agenda for the meeting was approved. Edward moved, and Kathy seconded. Adopted by unanimous consent.

III. Graduate Division

A. Mary McMahon, Assistant Dean of Graduate Division, explained that one building in the new Manzanita complex would be devoted to graduate student housing, likely for out-of-state students. This will include 45 beds in single and shared rooms and represents a partial, temporary solution for the graduate housing shortage.

B. Mary also requested feedback from graduate students for their views and input regarding the Student Resources Building. She can be contacted via email at deans@graddiv.ucsb.edu.

C. Yonie Harris, Dean of Students, was introduced as the new interim advisor to the GSA from the Office of Student Life. She recommended that graduate students form their own focus groups regarding the Student Resources Building. Yonie can be contacted at harris-y@sa.ucsb.edu.

IV. Vox Populi

A. Shawn Landres introduced AS Internal Vice President Shaina Walter, who was attending the meeting representing Associated Students.

B. Jeff Onsted of Geography noted that outdated furniture in his department has poor ergonomics, and may lead to physical injuries if not addressed. Shawn noted that the GSA would look into establishing guidelines for future furniture purchases. Mary McMahon responded that such issues should be addressed within the individual departments before any further actions are taken. Shawn noted that safety issues affecting students in their roles as teaching assistants are union issues, which can be addressed to the Graduate Division accordingly.

C. Stu Levenbach of Marine Biology announced that the Shoreline Preservation Fund, of which he is a graduate representative, is offering grants to students doing related research. The Shoreline Preservation Fund website can be found at http://spf.as.ucsb.edu.

V. Campus Resources

Dr. Cynthia Bowers, Director of the Student Health Service, addressed the impact of budget cuts on the SHS and the students that use it. She noted that cuts ranging from ten percent to fifteen percent by mid-2002 were likely. Although she explained that services are unlikely to be cut, she noted that the SHS would either have to support an increased lock-in fee or additional fees per visit. The latter option could include items such as lab fees, physical therapy fees, etc. Regarding lock-in fees, using her calculations, which were made available to interested students, the size of the lock-in fee increase could range anywhere from $5.33 to $13 per quarter, depending on the size of the budget cut. She noted that graduate students have traditionally supported increased lock-in fees. Mark from Anthropology raised concerns that students receiving the bulk of the cuts because they often have the least clout as a group on campus. Dr. Bowers responded that graduate students need to voice concerns over how the cuts should be distributed.

Jeff from Geography raised concerns about price confusion and insurance claims delays. Desiree from Anthropology noted the need for additional women's services.

April Beckett, Director of Clinical Services at SHS, discussed the possibility of increasing SHS benefits to dependents of graduate students.

VI. Action Items

A. Committee Appointments/Confirmations

Committee appointments approved as submitted. Edward moved, Kathy seconded.

B. Budget

1. Officer and committee stipend reauthorization

a. Kathy passed out a list of stipend adjustments to address inequities in time spent on various committees, as certain committees demand much greater work than do

others. Approval of the proposed adjustments was moved by Edward and seconded by Jeff Onsted. Adopted by unanimous consent.

b. It was proposed that committee members should not be paid for sitting on committees that don't meet. This was moved by Edward and seconded by Soomin Chun. Adopted by unanimous consent.

C. Funding requests

No requests were presented.

D. Campus Elections Reform

Shawn introduced a timeline of the election reform issue as it has developed over the past year. The document detailed the controversial passage of the Student Resources Building in the elections of April 2001 and the subsequent GSA actions for future election reform, plus the response of the Campus Elections Commission in forming a Working Group to outline changes for future elections. Shawn explained that the Working Group's proposed changes were acceptable to the GSA. At the same time, he expressed deep dissatisfaction with what he believed to be attempts by the CEC to delay implementation of the Working Group reforms until after the 2002 elections.

Jessica Winston further elaborated on the election rules and how the SRB could be approved with less than fifteen percent support among graduate students under current rules.

Alan Levy, member of the Campus Elections Commission, explained that the CEC believes that there will not be enough time to implement the reforms for the April 2002 elections.

A resolution calling for the immediate implementation of campus election reform was moved by Jessica and seconded by Edward.

Campus Elections Resolution Draft

I. Background

On June 26, 2001, the Chancellor wrote to the Campus Elections Commission requesting that an Ad Hoc Working Group be appointed by the CEC. The charge of the Ad Hoc Working Group was to review the campus-wide elections process, with a focus on concerns outlined by the Graduate Students Association.

The Ad Hoc Working Group met throughout the months of October and November, 2001. Its recommendations to the Campus Elections Commission regarding campus-wide elections were presented to the CEC on November 26, 2001.

II. Resolution

Whereas the GSA General Council finds that the currently approved guidelines of the Campus Elections Commission disenfranchise graduate students; and

Whereas the GSA General Council acknowledges that the Campus Elections Commission has expressed its intent to consider improving its guidelines in response to graduate student concerns; and

Whereas the GSA General Council notes that both the Memorandum of Understanding recommending the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group and the Chancellor's charge to the Campus Elections Commission anticipates that the Working Group's recommendations would be considered for implementation "in time for Spring 2002 elections"; and

Whereas the GSA General Council finds that the Working Group Report provides remedies that address these flaws in a barely adequate manner; and

Whereas the GSA General Council finds that implementing the Working Group's recommendations is a necessary, but not entirely sufficient, first step toward rectifying the inequities in the current Campus Elections Commission guidelines; and

Whereas the GSA General Council finds that any campus-wide election run under current or only superficially revised guidelines would be unacceptable; and

Whereas the GSA General Council recognizes the importance and urgency of putting mandatory student fee proposals before student voters; and

Whereas the GSA General Council notes that according to current campus regulations, the GSA is authorized to hold mandatory student fee referenda for graduate students, just as the Associated Students is authorized to hold mandatory student fee referenda for undergraduate students;

Therefore be it resolved:

That the GSA General Council registers its deep disappointment that the Campus Elections Commission to date has not devoted sufficient consideration to applying the Ad Hoc Working Group's recommendations in time for Spring 2002 elections; and

That the GSA General Council encourages the Campus Elections Commission to apply the Ad Hoc Working Group's recommendations in time for Spring 2002 elections; and

That the GSA General Council requests that the Chancellor not authorize any campus-wide elections overseen by the Campus Elections Commission until such time as the CEC reviews and applies the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group; and

That the GSA General Council requests that the Chancellor, as soon as possible but not later than the first day of Winter Quarter 2002, inform the Campus Elections Commission that he will not authorize any campus-wide elections overseen by the Campus Elections Commission until such time as the CEC reviews and applies the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group

That the GSA General Council requests that the Chancellor immediately convene the Campus Regulations Committee with instructions to implement the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group in the language of Chapter VI of the *Campus Regulations Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations, and Students*; and

That the GSA General Council recommends that any mandatory student fee ballot initiatives intended to be held during the 2001-2002 academic year be submitted to AS and GSA for possible inclusion in the Spring ballots of the AS and the GSA, and that this practice continue indefinitely pending revision of CEC guidelines according to the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group; and

That in the event the Chancellor authorizes any campus-wide elections prior to the CEC's having applied the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group with immediate effect, the GSA General Council shall:

1. Prohibit the GSA from participating in any campus-wide elections process overseen by the Campus Elections Commission, including but limited to providing electronic polling or official election turnout results;
2. Authorize the GSA Executive Committee to pursue all political and legal avenues, both at UCSB and beyond the campus, by which to preserve graduate students' voting rights.

After a short break during which representatives reviewed the proposed resolution, debate resumed on the substance of the resolution.

Shawn addressed concerns about the impact of withdrawing from the 2002 campuswide elections, noting that issues like the Women's Center could still be voted upon.

Mark from Anthropology recommended changes in the resolution to allow for more input from graduate students before any decision to participate is made. He suggested that the language be changed to read

> That in the event the Chancellor authorizes any campus-wide elections prior to the CEC's having applied the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group with immediate effect, the GSA General Council shall *reserve the right to*~~:~~

~~1.~~ ~~P~~ **p**rohibit the GSA from participating in any campus-wide elections process overseen by the Campus Elections Commission, including but limited to providing electronic polling or official election turnout results.~~;~~

Yonie suggested that the CEC might not have had the ability to approve the Working Group's recommendations during the short time frame from the end of November to the end of the quarter.

John Corbett noted that postponing a referendum gives the GSA maximum flexibility and still makes an important statement of intent.

Kathy and Soomin both suggest that the failure to immediately enact reforms does not amount to malicious intent or an outright refusal to enact reforms.

Alan said that the CEC had had plenty of time to enact the reforms if it so chose.

Motion to delete last paragraph of resolution moved by Jessica and seconded by John:

> ~~2. Authorize the GSA Executive Committee to pursue all political and legal avenues, both at UCSB and beyond the campus, by which to preserve graduate students' voting rights.~~

Accepted as friendly amendment.

Motion to vote of the revised language of the resolution moved by Sabrina for Political Science and seconded by Kathy.

Resolution adopted by voice vote with three abstentions.

I. Discussion Items
   A. GSHIP Revisions for 2002-2003
      1. Alan Levy, representative of the Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan Committee, said he was looking for final comments on possible improvements for next year, such as improving the dental program. He noted that last year they passed a chiropractor benefit.
      2. Shawn noted the possibility of replacing the current insurance broker due to problems encountered by other campuses.
      3. Mark from Anthropology inquired about the eye program. Alan explained Dr. Bowers's opposition to it.
      4. Yonie noted that UCSB has lower insurance costs because of GSHIP coverage.
      5. Sarah Battersby noted that there is still an open position on GSHIP.
   B. Upcoming GSA Lock-In Fee Votes
      1. Shawn noted that he favors discussion of prioritizing lock-in fee increases and being more focused.
   C. GSA Constitution Revision

No discussion on this issue took place.

II. Information Items
   A. Information Items was moved behind Discussion Items due to time demands. Motioned by Edward, seconded by Alan Levy.
   B. GSA Issues Agenda 2001-2002

Due to time constraints, Shawn asked the Council to examine the GSA Issues Agenda and raise any objections. No objections were raised.

C. Officer Reports

1. Edward mentioned that he still needs someone from Isla Vista to serve on IVPAC.

III. Adjournment

A. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Corbett

Press Secretary