

## **GSO Senate Meeting- November 15, 2011-Minutes**

- I.** Meeting called to order at 5:40 p.m. by Stalin Federico Mafla
  - Thirty-four senators present.
  
- II.** Approval of Agenda
  - The agenda sent out to the senators on 11/11/2011 was corrected on 11/14/2011 and this amended agenda was sent out to the senators in the last invitation for the Senate Meeting.
  - The amendment to the agenda was approved unanimously. (34-0-0)
  
- III.** Approval of Minutes from the last Senate Meeting in October
  - The minutes sent out to the senators on 11/11/2011 were corrected on 11/14/2011 and the amended minutes were sent out to the senators in the last invitation for the Senate Meeting.
  - No further corrections were made to the Minutes.
  - The amendment to the Minutes was approved unanimously. (34-0-0)
  
- IV.** President's Report
  - 1) Meeting with The Provost Dennis N. Assanis
    - We have been invited to searches such as the Dean of Libraries, and Director of DoIT.
    - Dr. Dennis N. Assanis said that Stony Brook University will move to an activity based budget system that assigns costs as well as revenues to the units who generate them.
    - Dr. Dennis N. Assanis thinks that the PhD funding system needs some changes. He believes that students should be guaranteed funding throughout their tenure-it may decrease enrollment but will increase quality.
  
  - 2) Shared Service Centers (SSC's)
    - SSC's brought a lot of attention from faculty and staff from the Department of Music and the Department of Humanities.
    - Dr. Dennis N. Assanis thinks that it is sometimes useful and effective to have SSC's.
  
  - 3) SUNY Student Assembly
    - No one nominated for the position of Graduate Student Representative.
    - Our president Charilaos Papadopoulos has nominated himself for this position as a non-voting member with a view of running as a full-number next year.
  
  - 4) University Senate
    - Resolution on access to course evaluations, to course syllabi.
    - Our resolution on SSCs got adopted by the University Senate as a "sense of the senate" resolution.

#### V. Vice President's Report

- At the College of Arts & Sciences we have been working hard on SSC's. A Question & Answer document has been prepared in conjunction with Dean Squires.
- On Monday, November 21st a resolution on SSC's will be voted on. A report will be provided next week.
- President Stanley said: "A university without Arts is not a university". He created a position which will be responsible of collecting funds for the Department of Music and the Department of Arts.

#### VI. The second amendment to the Agenda

- Since the Treasurer and NAGPS Representative Jen Sidorova was late, a second amendment was made to the agenda to have the Budget Committee Report and the NAGPS Representative Report presented after the RA Union Report.
- The second amendment to the Agenda approved unanimously. (34-0-0)

#### VII. Committee Nominations

- The following senators joined the Academic Affairs Committee:  
Elizabeth Sklute (Department of Geosciences), Jacob De Hoyos (Department of Music), Kelly Jones (Department of History), Matt Borths (Department of Anatomical Sciences)
- The following senator joined the Director of DoIT Committee:  
Elizabeth Sklute (Department of Geosciences)
- The following senator joined the Dean of Libraries Committee:  
Heidi Jensen (Department of Geosciences)
- The following senator joined the Parking Appeals Board Committee:  
Elizabeth Sklute (Department of Geosciences)
- The following senators joined the Senate of the College of Arts and Sciences Committee:  
Charles DiRienzo (Department of Ecology & Evolution), Tess Geers (Department of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences), Rose Sayre (Department of Sociology), Vasiliy Safin (Department of Psychology), Jacob De Hoyos (Department of Music)

Committee nominations approved unanimously. (34-0-0)

#### VIII. NYPIRG Report

- Please see the GSO website <http://sbgso.org/> for the NYPIRG Report.

**Question:** Are there any graduate students among the interns?

**Answer:** I recently started working as the NYPIRG Representative but as far as I know one of the interns is a graduate student.

#### IX. Production Manager-Bill Wenzel's Report

- Next show in Stony Brooklyn Concert Series is going to be by Beans and Homeboy Sandman in University Café on December 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:30 p.m.
- Bill Wenzel emphasized that we have enough budget to afford the organizational costs of University Café events and we should do our best to organize events and utilize the University Café.
- He is looking for volunteers to help organize events such as Karaoke, Trivia, Jazz Night, Cover Bands, Reggae Bands, DJ Nights, Theater Productions, Art Gallery, Random Parties, Movies, and Game Nights. And any other suggested event organizations are also welcome.
- Sunday Street Acoustic Series (an acoustic music series at University Cafe) agreed to give SBU students half price tickets. Visit <http://universitycafe.org/> for show listings.

#### X. GSEU Report by Marcelo Disconzi

- There were two main issues involved in the negotiation process between the State and the GSEU: 1) A back pay to TA's/GA's who were supposed to get an increase in their paychecks in years 2007-2009 but did not. 2) An increase in the paychecks of all current TA's/GA's.
- 1) Back pay: People who worked in July 2007-July 2009 as a TA/GA will be entitled to a back pay of 3% for each year (around \$900 in total) on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. If they worked partially during this period they will get a proportionate payment.
- 2) Raise in paychecks: As GSEU, we thought we would get a raise in our paychecks also on November 23<sup>rs</sup>. However, there was a misunderstanding between the State and the GSEU and the State told us raises and back pay will be given separately. So we don't know when we will be getting our paycheck increases yet.

**Question:** Will we lose our right to a back pay if we worked as TA's/GA's in 2007-2009 but are not working anymore?

**Answer:** Even if you are not a TA/GA now you'll get the payment as long as you're still a matriculated student.

**Question:** Are you going to negotiate for periods July 2009-July 2011?

**Answer:** I will be graduating this winter, so I will not be working as the Business Agent anymore, but GSEU will continue working on receiving all the funds that the employees have the right to receive. However, every negotiation period takes time and for now we would like to get the back pay for 2007-2009 and our paycheck increase. After that GSEU will try to negotiate not only for a two-year period (2009-2011) but a five-year period.

- If you are not on payroll now, your check will be sent to the address you put in file before. This is a problem because the address you have in file is most probably outdated. GSEU talked to Human Resources about this issue and asked "In case our check gets lost can we get it from you?" The Human Resources is reluctant to do

that but they suggested that they are going to provide us contact information to call and track our checks.

- You should check out [www.cwa1104.com](http://www.cwa1104.com) for contact info if we have more questions.

**Question:** If a student was a TA in 2007-2009 but he graduated, will he receive a back pay?

**Answer:** No. Initially the State told us that they would honor the commitment of paying graduates also but they are backing out of this informal commitment now.

## **XI.** RA Union Report by Betul Pamuk

- The RA Union is trying to make every RA a member of the union.
- In order to become a member, everybody has to fill out a short form because they are not employees of the State but of the private company. The membership form is available on the RA Union website: <http://sbraunion.org/>

**Question:** If we filled a form before when we just came to SBU, do we need to fill it out again?

**Answer:** No, it is good enough if you filled it out before.

- If you would like to be department coordinator or have an active role in the RA union, contact Betul Pamuk.

**Question:** Can you send us the list of members?

**Answer:** No because the RA union can not circulate the names to everyone directly (just like GSEU and GSO) but the list can be distributed via department coordinators.

## **XII.** General Discussion Section

The following are the questions/requests of the senators:

**Question:** When we are looking for information regarding a particular issue it is very hard to find which form to click on. Can something be done about this?

**Answer:** We agree that sometimes it is hard to find which form to click but we are working on it. Please send an e-mail to us and Ciprian Gal about your suggestions regarding the GSO website.

**Question:** Is it possible that the files you send us and you put on the website are in pdf/html format? Also we would like to see the format before actually opening the file.

**Answer:** We will try to send the files in double format from now on.

**Question:** Can you have all BC events on the upcoming events section of the website?

**Answer:** They are already listed on the website.

**Question:** But can we have them listed in a calendar?

**Answer:** You can click on the “Calendar View” on the bottom of the page and then the events will be put on the calendar.

**Request:** It would be very helpful not just for senators but for all students if all of the things that GSO can do for the graduate students are listed and explained in a detailed and organized way on the GSO website.

**Question (from the President):** USG has a resolution regarding making our campus a smoke-free campus. They scheduled it for their next meeting. What do you think?

**Answers (from the Senators):**

- Some other SUNY campuses have particular spots on campus for smoking. Instead of prohibiting smoking on campus completely, it would be good if we also had particular spots on campus for smoking. This way both smokers wouldn't have to get out of the campus to smoke, and non-smokers would know which spots to avoid.
- It would be good if there was some covered place to smoke.
- It is really risky for some people, people who have asthma for example. It has serious risks, it is not just about being annoyed by the smell.
- If smoking will be prohibited on campus, we should as well prohibit regular cars and require drivers to have hybrid cars only if they want to drive on campus.

**Request:** There is a SUNY cap that a graduate student should not be making more than 30,000 dollars. I could not get the NSF fellowship because my stipend plus the NSF fellowship exceeds 30,000. Can something be done about this?

**Request:** If there is very little time between two classes and if these two classes are really apart from each other it is a big problem because the students are always late for the classes. We need to do something to solve this issue.

**Request:** Stony Brook University was an important center of activism before but it is not anymore. If you would like to support “Occupy Stony Brook”, get involved with the issues, problems of all students and do something about it, go to the following website <http://occupystonybrook.org/>

### **XIII.** Budget Committee Report

- Please see the GSO website <http://sbgso.org/> for the Budget Committee Report.

**XIV.** NAGPS Representative Report

- Please see the GSO website <http://sbgso.org/> for the NAGPS Representative Report.

**XV.** Old Business

- No comments were made regarding the old business.

**XVI.** New Business

- No comments were made regarding the new business.

**XVII.** Meeting adjourned.

- Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Selin Gonen, GSO Secretary.