

GSO Senate – Minutes – March 13, 2007

The meeting begins with 31 Senators and 5 Executives

1) Welcome Remarks

- a. The President welcomes the Senators to the meeting. There are two resolutions that will be brought before the Senate today.

2) Approval of the Agenda

- a. The Agenda is approved by unanimous consent.

3) Approval of the Minutes

- a. The Minutes are approved by unanimous consent.

4) Resolution on Coca-Cola

- a. The President introduces *Sen. Woulfin (History)* and Anita who will present on the Resolution regarding Coca-Cola. The resolution is endorsed by the Executive Council.
- b. Anita from the Social Justice Alliance states that Coca-Cola has been involved in egregious human rights violations in Colombia, especially with its relationship to its bottlers and their oppression of unionization efforts there. In India, Coca-Cola is breaking water hand pumps, using up water, polluting the environment, and selling drinks with high levels of pesticides (24 times higher than allowed in the EU and US). We would like to introduce more choices so that consumers do not have to purchase Coca-Cola products. The contract with the University is up in 2008 and we want to renegotiate the contract.
- c. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* says that this resolution calls for an ethics committee to look at all contracts that are to be renewed and for this to be applied to the Coca-Cola contract. We would like a voice in these contracts and this resolution is a first step towards that. Coca-Cola has been kicked off of 34 campuses and has been dropped by one of the most ethical investment companies.
- d. *Sen. Walls (Ecology)* asks why we don't go further and say that the GSO is opposed to renewing the contract with Coca-Cola.
- e. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* says, it is a good question. We are happy with this resolution, which came out of discussions with the Executive Board. This was as far as the Executive Committee was willing to go on the issue. But, if you want to strengthen the resolution we can take alleged out of the title.
- f. The President states that we should keep the word "alleged" in the title. There is some discussion about whether or not the word alleged should be in the title.
- g. *Sen. Kinney (Marine Sciences)* makes a Motion to pass the resolution as written. *Sen. Colmenares-Angulo (Material Sciences)* seconded the Motion.
- h. The Motion to endorse the resolution as written passes 19-0-2.

5) Resolution on the Smoking Ban

- a. The President states that the resolution regarding the smoking ban is to emphatically oppose a smoking ban being imposed on the university, a proposal coming from the University Senate.
- b. The Secretary states that he was a member of the Smoking Ban Subcommittee, as was *Sen. Schiller(Physics)* and that although the committee was billed as a cross-campus dialogue on the smoking policy, really it was structurally set up to limit the discourse to proposals that would strengthen the smoking ban proposal. The Minority opposed this and wrote their own report calling for a new committee to review the smoking policy.
- c. *Sen. Moore (Economics)* makes a Motion to approve the resolution. *Sen. Schiller (Physics)* seconds the Motion. The Motion passes 20-1-0.

6) WUSB

- a. The radio station, WUSB, presents a letter to the President thanking the Senate for its generosity—specifically the \$1000 allocation for Free Speech Radio News. The GSO will be thanked on the air.

7) Budget Committee

- a. The MFA program is requesting \$358.13 from the GSO for a lecture by Steven Rosenberg. The Budget Committee recommends funding in the full amount. *Sen. Moore (Economics)* makes a Motion to approve. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* seconds the Motion. The Motion is approved by unanimous consent.
- b. The Karaoke club is requesting \$700 for a Karaoke contest. The Budget Committee recommends funding in the full amount. *Sen. Bonsra (Pharmacology)* asks a clarifying question about the DJ expense. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* makes a Motion to approve. *Sen. Walls (Ecology)* seconds the Motion. The Motion is approved by unanimous consent.
- c. The Freewheel Bicycle Club requests \$900 for safety equipment and shop supplies. The Budget Committee recommends funding in the full amount. *Sen. Walls (Ecology)* makes a Motion to approve. *Sen. Hamilton (Psychology)* seconds the Motion. The Motion is approved by unanimous consent.
- d. The Treasurer reports that H&R Block is doing consulting on taxes for \$25 an hour and available twice a week until mid-April. There is also a survey given at the end of the consultations and the responses have been favorable.
- e. The Treasurer states that an Internal Audit is still being looked at and we will release the information at the April meeting.
- f. The Treasurer states that the Budget Committee is currently preparing the Budget for next fiscal year. He also states that he will be out of the country during the next Senate meeting, so *Sen. Moore (Economics)* will serve as stand-in Treasurer.

8) Social Concerns Committee

- a. The Vice President encourages Senators to please fill out the Quality of Life Survey and encourage the graduate students in your respective departments to fill out the survey. Flyers were distributed for posting.
- b. The Vice President reports that the Bus Advisory Group met and reports that no one is riding the Inner Loop bus. Therefore, it will be turned into a shuttle, which is good news for Schomburg because their noise level will go down.

9) Elections Committee

- a. The Secretary encouraged active Senators to consider running for a position on next year's Executive Council. There will be an informational session on Tuesday, March 20 at 6pm in SAC rm 227. Candidate forms are due on March 30th.

10) Rules and Constitution Committee

- a. The Speaker states that the RCC is considering several changes to the constitution including the addition of a GSO Travel Line and the dissolution of the Lounge Committee.

11) GSELF Committee

- a. *Sen. Gersch (Genetics)* states that we need to nominate and elect a Chair for the 2007-2008 GSELF Committee.
- b. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* asks if there is a plan to loosen the requirements. *Sen. Gersch (Genetics)* replies that this is currently being discussed.

12) Housing Committee

- a. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* reports that the student tenant survey is up and running March 19-30. The survey carries the endorsement of many organizations and we encourage you to fill it out.

13) GSEU Liaison Committee

- a. *Sen. Walls (Ecology)* reports that actions are being taken to improve the student TA stipend.
- b. The union is trying to persuade the Stony Brook University administration that it should subsidize the salary or play a larger role in lobbying Albany to increase the stipend.
- c. Supportive faculty members have been writing letters of support.
- d. The Graduate Council is working on the TA stipend issue and working with Provost McGrath.
- e. We would like to find out data from each department on why students choose to not come to the department. If senators could try to get this information from Graduate Secretaries, it would be appreciated.
- f. We also want to facilitate writing letters to local media to embarrass the administration into giving us a higher stipend.
- g. Also, please send letters to elected representatives. Steve Englebright has been great on this issue and very supportive. Lavalley and Flannigan are on

the influential Higher Education Committee, but the most important person to convince on this issue is the governor.

- h. We would like a department to go to the SUNY Board of Trustees meeting on March 20 to represent the students' interests at Stony Brook University.
- i. On March 28, there will be a rally for a better contract.

14) NYPIRG

- a. Scott Zotto reports on TAP reform. Legislatures had no idea that graduate students could not earn much from TAP, but NYPIRG is pushing to educate them on this issue.
- b. On Friday, March 23, 1:30, we will meet with Englebright regarding graduate TAP and we would love it if you could make it.
- c. There is also a cellular phone service reform bill that we are working on, since so many people now rely on cellular phones as their primary phone line.
- d. A company named Broadwater wants to put a liquefied natural gas facility in Long Island Sound, but we are fighting it because Long Island doesn't need it.
- e. There will be more information later about a sleepout in April where we will form a shantytown and do a sleep-in.

15) Closing Remarks

- a. The President remarks that we are looking for a Survival Guide Editor. The position pays \$700. If you want to apply, send resume & writing sample to the GSO office as well as a sample table of contents. A second position for Gradmag editor for next year will also be opening. If you want to do it, we need the same requirements as for the Survival Guide Editor. The GradMag editor earns 200/month during senate season.

16) Motion to adjourn

- a. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* makes a Motion to adjourn. *Sen. Gersch (Genetics)* seconds the Motion. The Motion passes by unanimous consent. The Meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Louis Esparza