

Minutes of the GSO Senate meeting on Thursday December 12th, 2002

Meeting started at 6:00pm with 25 senators present.

Minutes from November passed with no changes.

Budget items

Karl Junhke made a motion to pass all the Budget items with the suggested recommendation from the Budget Committee. Motion passed (20 in favor, 1 opposed and 1 abstain).

The Budget items that were approved were:

- a. *Students for Peace and Humanity* received \$225 for a cultural fundraiser event 'Hands and Feet are all alike' and \$300 for 'Faces of Iraq'.
- b. *Humanitas: a reconsideration*, the 15th annual interdisciplinary graduate conference at SBU received a \$1,000.
- c. SBCSSA and CARA received \$1,000 for the Spring Festival 2003.

Ron Willa did an overview of our Budget so far.

Committee reports

a. *GSO Committees*. The Senate approved new members of Committees: Salih Kocer was added at the University Senate, Karl Junhke, Christine Promin and Jasmina Sinanovic were added at the RCC Committee, Jasmina Sinanovic dropped the Social Concerns Committee and Elizabeth Bojsza was dropped from the Lounge Advisory Committee and Marisa Friedman was dropped from the RCC Committee. The Senate approved all the above removals and additions.

b. *Housing Committee*. Masa reported that the GSO Housing Committee based on quick housing poll at November Senate meeting, recommends that 100 spaces be reserved for

graduate students in the new housing complex. The insufficient housing is a big problem in Stony Brook area. However, the Housing Committee recommends this with great reservation since we are fully aware that the majority of grad students cannot afford to pay \$775 (cost projection as of Nov 15th) for a single room and there are no other options available.

c. *Student Life Committee and Graduate Council*. Angeliki presented the issues discussed in these committees. The report is attached..

d. *GSO/GSEU Liaison Committee*. Christine Promin and Bin Tang requested from the senators to find GSEU representatives from their Department. Bill Wharton said that departmental representatives are needed to compile a list of grievances and as a pool to draw negotiators from. Peter Langfelder asked about the vote on the dissolution and the answer was that the vote was never held. Fan Wang said that 1104 is a private union and that they can not represent us.

Special guest

The President of our University, Dr. Shirley Strum Kenny attended our Senate meeting.

She talked about the 6% total cut of the budget for next year (5% comes from the salary increase with no additional money coming in and 1% from utilities, cost of living increase). She said that her highest priority is no layoffs to take place. Caps will be put on enrollment for next year and very few hires for faculty will happen. Christine Promin asked about the Provost's statement at the Senate that TA/GA lines will be cut. Dr.Kenny said that this is the least favorable option. Dr. Kenny did not know whether there would be a tuition increase next year. Alex Kolker asked why this University is focused so much on sports. Dr.Kenny thinks that sports are important and added that Stony Brook University does not give scholarships to football players only on basis of need (for example TAP). Scott Graves asked about the hire freeze and how it is determined which departments get priority in that. Dr.Kenny replied that she does not know.

Peter Langfelder asked about the money that was spent to build the stadium, Dr.Kenny's residence and the fountain in our campus. Dr.Kenny replied that the stadium was built with special allocation from the state and that it was a high priority, her residence was built with money from the Stony Brook Foundation and that the fountain did not cost much money ('bits' and 'pieces' from facilities). Jasmina Sinanovic pointed out that it gives a bad picture when you spend so much money on 'wine and cheese' and Dr.Kenny said that none of this money is state money. About the Wang Center Dr.Kenny said that they reason why it has not opened yet is because there are parts of the center that are not finished yet.

Old business

a.*NYPIRG*. Melissa Morahan presented the functions of NYPIRG. Alex Kolker suggested that NYPIRG should help us fight against budget cuts.

b.*Resolution or Iraq*. Karl Juhnke presented the Iraq resolution at the Senate. The text of the resolution follows:

"Whereas, a war on Iraq would risk the lives of American troops and reservists, including students of Stony Brook University, and kill thousands of Iraqi civilians; and

Whereas, a war on Iraq would cost the United States government about ten times what it spends annually on higher education; and

Whereas, there is no public and credible evidence that Iraq presents an immediate threat to the United States;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Graduate Student Organization of Stony Brook University opposes a preemptive war on Iraq."

Karl Juhnke said that the group of people that composed it, want this to pass as a referendum for the first week of classes in the next semester so that they can see what the graduate student body thinks. Peter Langfelder asked what are we going to do with the resolution and the

answer was to be put in the minutes and at our newspaper. Kostas Pentikousis asked if it will be relevant in February and Katie Hoody answered that they go under the assumption that it will be. Alex Kolker noted that we do not have any legitimacy on the issue. Chi Ma noted that it is wrong for senators to decide what to vote for that matter and that it is important for everyone to look at this and decide what to vote. Peter Langfelder advised the senators to vote against it. Shawn Pottorf pointed out that the resolution does not have a certain purpose. Fan suggested the people who initiated the referendum to collect signatures and present them. Salih Kocer made a motion to end debate and 18 out of 24 senators voted yes. The issue was called to vote and 18 senators voted in favor of the referendum, 3 were opposed and 3 abstained. It was requested the special elections to take place during the first full week of classes (week of January 27th, 2003) through the SOLAR system website. On the vote on 'who is in favor of the special elections', 17 senators were in favor, 2 were opposed and 5 abstained.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm

Submitted by Angeliki Field-Pollatou

GSO Secretary

02/12/03

Senate meeting on December 12th, 2002

Secretary's report - Submitted by Angeliki Field-Pollatou

The following are not minutes of the meetings but important points that were discussed that I believe are of interest to the graduate students.

1. Student Life Committee (11/22/02, 12/06/02,12/12/02)

A short proposal about the moving of the SPOT to the End of the Bridge (EOB) was presented. The Committee decided to create a subcommittee to work on the issue. The members of this Committee are Christine Promin, Angeliki and Millar. Dr. Kelly was present at the meeting and he expressed concerns about the undergraduates that are occupying the space right now and the issue of who is going to have the control of the space. Dr. Kelly also said that an offer was never given to the GSO for the EOB.

In the December 6th meeting Dr. Kelly suggested to give a specific area in the EOB for graduate students to hold a reception and see how many people will actually come.

He also expressed interest in the results of the 'Quality of life' survey that GSO is organizing. Dr. Kelly said that FSA would help in covering a part of the cost of the survey.

On the meeting of 12/12/02 Dr. Martin and Dr. Kelly were present. Dr. Martin covered a little of the history of the SPOT and strongly supported the need for a space for graduate students on campus. It was suggested the End of the Bridge to be used during the break on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays (dates: 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25 of January) for use by the graduate students. Dr. Kelly said that FSA will pick up the cost of running the venue during January which will be in a form of reception for graduate students. After January the venue

will be held every Saturday at the same place. The reason this is done is to test whether there will be attendance from graduate students. The venue will be called, for now, 'The Experiment' and GSO will help in advertising it so that we can prove that there is really a need of space for graduate students.

2. Graduate Council (11/25/02)

If you are interested in the full report of the following changes please request a copy after the end of the meeting

a. Changes in the hours that domestic graduate students can work

Domestic graduate students in good academic standing should be permitted to obtain on campus employment up to 40 hours per week with some considerations.

b. Changes in the English Proficiency requirements for graduate students.

3. Quality of life survey

Present in the meeting: Masa, Angeliki, Kevin Kelly and Leonie Huddy (Political Sciences). Leonie presented us her work with surveys. The way they conduct surveys is through the phone so conducting the survey through the break is not appropriate. GSO will have the help of FSA for funding the survey and we are currently looking into other sources to support the survey as well (approximately cost of survey is \$8,000).

We have to consider whether we will have the SPOD students in our sample since most of them are part time and only stay one year in the program maybe they are not representative of the average graduate student at Stony Brook. The plan is the survey to start in the beginning of February. It takes about two weeks to conduct the survey and 2-3 weeks to analyze the data so it should be ready in the middle of March the latest.