

## **GSO Senate – Minutes – May 6, 2008**

**The meeting begins with 22 Senators and 5 Executives.**

### **1) Welcoming Remarks**

President Naydan congratulated the senators and thanked them for coming. She invited everyone to the GSO Spring Fest, Wednesday, May 7 in the Velvet Lounge.

### **2) Approval of the Agenda**

William Lahti (Computer Science) moved to approve the agenda. It was approved unanimously.

### **3) Approval of April Meeting Minutes**

Mark Rice (History) motioned to approve the minutes. Approved unanimously.

### **4) Oath of Office by the New Officers**

The newly elected officers of the GSO are Lila Naydan (English, President), Dylan Selterman (Psychology, VP), Christopher Young (Materials Science & Engineering, Treasurer), and Jose Colmenares-Angulo (Materials Science & Engineering, Secretary). They all took their oath of office.

### **5) President Kenny's Town-Hall Meeting**

President Naydan talked about the crisis with the University budget and the attempt by the state to cut off more than 10% of the University budget. This would affect, among other things, TA lines and many other important university functions.

A lively discussion developed on what the GSO's position on the matter should be. Some suggested that since many students signed the petition conveying mistrust of President Kenny's leadership, the GSO should not publicly declare support for her efforts. Others argued that these are two separate issues and we should find a way to express our objection to the cuts by the state without saying that we support other policies of President Kenny.

### **6) Campus Life Awards**

Speaker Antonenko presented the winners of this year's service and campus life awards.

Winners of GSO Distinguished Service Awards:

#### **Students:**

- \* **David J. Roelfs**
- \* **Eileen Chanza**
- \* **James Pearson**

#### **Administration:**

- \* **Ron Willa** (FSA)
- \* **Dallas Bauman** (Campus Res.)

- \* **Alan S. deVries** (Campus Res.)
- \* **Ken Fehling** (Campus Res.)
- \* **Eric Kahn** (Env. Committee)
- \* **Donna Sammis** (ILL)

Winners of Campus Life Awards:

- \* Advocacy Leadership Award: **Rob Gersch**
- \* Community Service Leadership Award: **Luigi Longobardi**
- \* Recreational Leadership: **Marie-Elena Ortiz**
- \* Multicultural Leadership: **Eileen Chanza**
- \* Best New Organization: **Hera Group**
- \* Campus (Life) Enhancement: **Cabaret**
- \* Most Outstanding Student Organization: **School of Social Welfare**
- \* Outstanding Educational Programming: **Hera Group for "Global Warming**
- \* Outstanding Multicultural Programming: **Sociology Graduate Student Forum**
- \* Outstanding Social Programming: **Material Science Club**

**7) GSELF Committee Nominations**

Eileen Chanza (English), Gregory Sabino (Biochemistry), and Jose Colmenares (Materials Science) volunteered to serve on this committee.

**8) Recruiting and Retention**

President Naydan presented. Dean Martin declared that if the GSEU signs the new contract with the state he will make the funds for recruitment and retention available for retention.

**9) Resolution on Smoking Policies**

Vice President Esparza discussed the fiasco in the University Senate when discussing the new resolution on smoking policy. The Executive Committee of the University Senate managed to pass a resolution that bypassed the two years work of the Smoking Subcommittee, chaired by VP Esparza. During the University Senate meeting the views of the GSO were marginalized. The President of the Senate also did not recognize President Nadyan's rights to speak and doubted the voting rights of the graduate representatives to the University Senate.

Following the meeting the GSO Executive Committee wrote a resolution (see **Appendix 1**) that reproaches the steps taken by the Executive Committee of the University Senate, and the behavior of the President of the University Senate during the meeting.

Dylan Selterman (Psychology) motioned to pass the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

**10) Resolution on UNBOUND Exhibition**

James Pearson (Art History) presented the issue of the UNBOUND art Exhibition and the unilateral decision of the University administration to take down a few of the art works in

the exhibition. The GSO Executive committee proposed a resolution that denounces the policy of the University administration on the matter (see **Appendix 2**)

Jose Colmenares (Material Sciences) motioned to approve the resolution. The motion passed and the resolution was approved

### **11) Resolution on Stony Brook's Educational Mission**

President Naydan presented a resolution originating from the History Department, which later on was developed by the GSO Executive Council into a longer resolution that expresses the graduate students discomfort regarding the directions that the university is taking, particularly regarding the education mission of the University as led by President Kenny and the allocations to the College of Arts and Sciences during the last few years. Dave Roelfs (Sociology) suggested that the resolution should be changed to include the understanding that there are two separate issues here: (1) the cuts imposed on the University by the state, and (2) the internal management of monies by President Kenny's office and what some have called "the starvation of the College of Arts and Sciences by the University administration". President Naydan asked Dave and Clint Young (Physics) work on revising the form and come up with a new resolution that considers this distinction. The issue was tabled to later on in the meeting.

When the senate went back to discussing the issue, Dave Roelfs read the revised resolution. Jose Colmenares (Material Sciences) motioned to make an amendment to the revised version asking to strike the part referring to the faculty and graduate petitions of no confidence in President Kenny. The motion passed. Jose Colmenares then made another motion to approve the amended resolution (see **Appendix 3**). It passed unanimously.

### **13) Presentation by Free Wheel**

A representative from Free Wheel talked about their establishment and services. More information is available online and in the GSO weekly emails.

### **14) Internal Committees Report**

#### a) Social Concerns Committee

VP Esparza explained about the recommendation of the SCC to the GSO regarding the GSO publication for next year (see **Appendix 4**). These changes are designated to prevent the many problems that arose this year and the disagreements between the GSO EC and the publication management.

#### b) Budget Committee

Treasurer Longobardi presented the current state of this year's budget. RAP funding finally started to catch up and many more applications were submitted lately. He asked the senate to allow overspending of the Legal Clinic line. Kate Klein (Genetics) motioned to approve the overspending. It was approved unanimously

## **I. Requests for Funding**

Treasurer Longobardi presented the requests for funding. They will all be coming from the miscellaneous grants:

- 1) Representatives from Cat Network asked the help of the GSO after the organization's funding was cut quite severely by the Undergraduate Government. The budget committee suggested giving the organization \$1,335. Jose Colmenares (Material Sciences) motioned to approve the funding. It was approved unanimously.
- 2) A representative from the Stony Brook Ice Hockey Team asked the GSO's support for the organization's activity. The budget committee recommended giving the club the \$1,000 left on the miscellaneous grants money. It was approved unanimously.

## **II. Budget for FY 2008-2009**

Treasurer Longobardi presented the revised proposed budget for next year (see **Appendix 5**). He explained about the different changes to the proposed budget. There were no questions or contentions from senators. Jose Colmenares (Material Sciences) motioned to approve the budget as is. The budget was approved unanimously.

### c) Rules and Constitution Committee

#### **I. Internal Control Program (ICP)**

Speaker Antonenko presented some suggested changes to the Internal Control Program (ICP) of the GSO. Mark Rice (History) motioned to approve the amendments to the ICP. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **II. Standing Committees Bylaws**

Speaker Antonenko presented the suggested changes to some of the standing committees' bylaws (mainly to the Elections committee bylaws). Clint Young (Physics) motioned to approve the change. The motion was approved unanimously.

### d) NYPIRG Report

Jacquie Lee, NYPIRG representative, spoke about the work of NYPIRG in helping the GSO to pass the mandatory fee in the referendum.

Clint Young (Physics) motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Have a wonderful summer,

Eran Shor

## APPENDIX 1

### **Resolution on the Smoking Policy Proposed at the May 2008 University Senate Meeting**

**Whereas** the Smoking Policy Sub-Committee of the Campus Environment Committee researched possible solutions to what some University Senators identified as a smoking policy problem on the Stony Brook University campus; and

**Whereas** that Campus Environment Committee's sub-committee was charged with finding a compromise between a campus-wide smoking ban and the present policy for smoking on campus, which requires that smokers keep 15 feet away from all building entrances; and

**Whereas** Louis Esparza, Chair of the Smoking Policy Sub-committee, was charged with the task of presenting the Sub-committee's proposal to the University Senate at its May 2008 meeting on behalf of the Campus Environment Committee; and

**Whereas** Louis Esparza clearly indicated that there would be two counter-proposals that he would allow to be brought forth during his presentation, without objection from University Senate President Bernard Lane: The position of the University Senate Executive Committee and the position of the GSO as it was to be represented by University Senator and GSO President Liliana Naydan; and

**Whereas** following the University Senate Executive Committee's presentation, Bernard Lane noted that Liliana Naydan would not be able to speak and initially refused to call on GSO-affiliated University Senators when they wanted to speak in support of the Campus Environment Committee's original presentation seemingly because he did not believe them to be University Senators; and

**Whereas** when GSO-affiliated University Senators attempted to vote on the smoking policy issue, Bernard Lane explicitly indicated skepticism regarding the senatorial status of all GSO-affiliated University Senators; and

**Whereas** Louis Esparza, also a voting member of the University Senate, in particular did not have the opportunity to justify why the Campus Environment Committee made the proposal of a 20-feet-from-the-entrance-of-a-building ban as opposed to a ban on smoking that mandated that smokers smoke a minimum of 50 feet away from all Stony Brook campus building entrances; and

**Whereas** the GSO believes that the Campus Environment Committee has clear reasons for proposing a 20-ft. ban as opposed to a 50-ft. ban; and

**Whereas** the GSO has always seen the Campus Environment Committee's charge and its smoking policy subcommittee's *prime* charge as being to determine a fair smoking distance-from-buildings proposal; and

**Whereas** after two years of researching the issue, the Campus Environment Committee's smoking distance recommendation was wholly disregarded via an amendment as the Executive Committee's first response to Louis Esparza's presentation; be it

**Resolved** that the GSO asks the President of the University Senate's Executive Committee to allow for a fair and balanced presentation by a representative of the Campus Environment Committee during the September 2008 University Senate meeting; and be it further

**Resolved** that Louis Esparza should have the authority to appoint a presenter to present in his stead if he himself will be unable to present during the September 2008 University Senate meeting; and be it further

**Resolved** that the GSO asks that Stony Brook University not enforce any changes in campus smoking policy until a fairly moderated presentation is given and another vote is taken on the issue following the fairly moderated presentation; and be it further

**Resolved** that the GSO issues a Motion of No Confidence in the University Senate; and be it further

**Resolved** that the GSO supports University Senators, should they Move to Impeach Bernard Lane from his post as President of the University Senate; and be it further

**Resolved** that the GSO supports the Graduate Student Employees Union, should it file a complaint of Improper Practice against Stony Brook University; and be it further

**Resolved** that the GSO implores the University Senate to strike the May 2008 vote on the Campus Smoking Policy from the Minutes at the September 2008 meeting of the University Senate for not being conducted in compliance with Roberts Rules of Order.

## APPENDIX 2

### Resolution on the UNBOUND exhibition

**Whereas**, the UNBOUND exhibition, an established portion of the SSK Art Festival that allows the graduate and undergraduate students of Stony Brook to activate the various spaces on campus through the creation and placement of visual art, was a program established by and has since been organized by graduate students; and

**Whereas**, the most appropriate measures were taken to gain permission for installation and in some cases installation pieces were installed under the supervision of the building managers and engineers; and

**Whereas**, the next day when UNBOUND opened President Shirley Strum Kenny ordered the removal of an installation piece because it didn't fit her aesthetic vision of the building by having her Vice President for Facilities and Services, Barbara Chernow, declare it structurally unsound; and

**Whereas**, three pieces has been taken down by the opening day of the SSK Arts Festival; and

**Whereas**, further installations of any student pieces had been ordered suspended by the organizer of the SSK Arts Festival the day of the opening; be it

**Resolved** that GSO opposes the university interference in a scholar's works and finds it utterly unethical; and be it further

**Resolved** that treats such a unilateral decision to remove portions of the UNBOUND exhibition as unfair to not only all who study the visual art, cultural studies, comparative literature, computer imaging, and specialized branches of many other fields, but also to the entire academic community of the Stony Brook University in general; and be it further

**Resolved** that GSO requests that in the future all the appropriate policies be made publicly available and known to all interested parties so that such an unfortunate incident does not recur; and be it further

**Resolved** that the GSO recommends the creation of an advisory board consisting of one member of administration and one faculty advisor to assist the graduate student curator; and be it further

**Resolved** that GSO requests a formal apology from the University administration to all affected parties, and the academic community of Stony Brook University in general.

## APPENDIX 3

### Resolution on Stony Brook's Education Mission

**Whereas** the Graduate Student Organization recognizes three distinct threats to graduate student funding, namely:

- 1) the Governor's proposal to impose a cap on spending from revenue producing sources such as tuition, fees, residence halls, and the hospital that will result in both a cut of state TA-funded positions, reducing the number of positions by 79 (914 to 835), and a cut of \$2.3 million in the adjunct faculty budget, preventing the university from teaching 657 sections next year,
- 2) the New York State Legislature's budget cuts to the SUNY system that will result in additional cuts (estimated at \$5 to \$5.5 million) to Stony Brook, and
- 3) the budget allocation decisions made internally at Stony Brook that have resulted in chronic under-funding and have created problems for faculty and graduate students teaching courses and undergraduate and graduate students taking courses at Stony Brook University; and

**Whereas** cutting so many sections of courses while increasing enrollment keeps Stony Brook's classes crowded and limits the opportunities for teachers to teach effectively in smaller, more personalized classrooms; and

**Whereas** all three of the funding threats outlined above adversely affect graduate student support and progress towards degree completion, this resolution seeks to specifically address our concerns with internal allocation decisions; therefore be it

**Resolved** that the GSO asks Shirley Strum Kenny and all Stony Brook administrators to work toward directly channeling funding toward improving the quality of undergraduate and graduate education; and also be it

**Resolved** that the GSO opposes the cancellation of any courses being taught by Teaching Assistants and graduate students working as adjuncts for Stony Brook University because successful completion of graduate study for graduate students enrolled at Stony Brook necessitates funding opportunities that support graduate students while they participate in their educational endeavors.



## APPENDIX 4

The SCC proposes that the GSO take the following actions:

- 1) **Change the name of the *GradMag* to *News & Blues*.** All GSO documents should reflect this change, including the ICP, staff contracts, the FY'08-'09 budget line item, and the Mission Statement of the publication.
- 2) **Modify the contract of *News & Blues*** to strongly suggest a journalism background and emphasize that current events are a central component of the publication. The Call for Applicants should state that applicants with a journalism background will be strongly favored in the selection process.
- 3) **Increase the budget line of *News & Blues*** to attract someone with a journalism background. The budget should also allow for an Assistant Editor, Staff writer(s), printing costs, and a discretionary fund. The Editor should receive no less than \$4,000 and additional funding should be available for operational costs as needed.
- 4) **Develop better communication and disclosure between EC and Editor.** Many of the problems that have been brought before this committee regarding the publication are a result of miscommunication between the EC and the Editor. Any significant changes that members of the EC are considering for the publication, including changes to the name of the publication, budget adjustments, changes to the staff, action taken in response to website statistics, and other such changes, should be done in consultation with the Editor. Any problems that arise between the EC and the Editor should be arbitrated by SCC.
- 5) **Modify the Mission Statement of *News & Blues*** to reflect that the publication is to publish items of relevant journalistic media interest, with a dual focus on news media and what is termed here “blues” or op-ed and other non-news media styles. The publication should not favor one style over the other in any drastic fashion and should always keep the graduate student audience into account.
- 6) **Prioritize a rebirth of *News & Blues*.** The aforementioned changes are part of a comprehensive strategy to improve the visibility of the publication in a drastic manner as well as to improve the internal structures that have led to administrative conflicts in the past. This strategy is meant to have *News & Blues* best serve the graduate student community. The GSO should have a publication that reports on both news of interest as well as views of disinterest. The SCC feels that these steps bring the GSO closer to fulfilling that mission.

Best,

Louis Edgar Esparza (Chair)  
Kate Klein  
Xiaona Li  
Dylan Selterman  
Liliana Naydan (Ex-Officio)  
Rob Gersch (Non-voting)

**APPENDIX 5—GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION: FISCAL YEAR 2008-09**

<b>Income</b>		<b>Variance from 07-08</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>Variance from 07-08</b>
Activity Fee	\$204,000	-6,000		
Interest	3,000	375		
Graduate School RAP Grant	10,000	0		
Research Foundation RAP Grant	10,000	0		
President's Office RAP Grant	10,000	0		
College of Engineering and Applied Sciences RAP Grant	3,000	0		
College of Arts and Sciences RAP Grant	5,000	0		
Miscellaneous Income	2,000	-1,000		
<b>Total Income</b>			<b>247,000</b>	<b>-6,625</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
<b><u>Operational Expenses</u></b>				
<b>GSO Office</b>			<b>5,800</b>	<b>0</b>
Office Equipment & Supplies	2,500	0		
Telephone	800	0		
Insurance	2,500	0		
<b>Payroll</b>			<b>37,300</b>	<b>9,900</b>
Officer Stipends	21,000	5,000		
Office Manager and Assistant	7,000	300		
Web Master	2,400	0		
Public Relations	3,500	2,500		
GSA Supplement	2,000	2,000		
Payroll Tax/Insurance	1,400	100		
<b>Accounting</b>			<b>29,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>
FSA Administrative Fee	25,000	5,000		
External Auditor	4,000	0		
<b>Internal GSO Functions</b>			<b>12,500</b>	<b>-400</b>
Meetings	3,000	600		
Miscellaneous Expense	1,000	0		
Graduate Student Nights	5,000	0		
GSO Travel	3,000	-1,000		
Committee Expenses	500	-500		
NAGPS membership	500	500		
<b>Total Operational Expenses</b>			<b>\$ 84,600</b>	<b>\$ 14,500</b>
<b>GSO Publications</b>			<b>8,900</b>	<b>0</b>
Survival Guide	3,200	0		

Printing	2,500		
Editor	700		
<b>Periodic Publication</b>	<b>5,700</b>	-2,700	
Editor in Chief	2,300		
Assistant Editor	1,400		
Publication Grant	2000		
<b>Contributions and Public Service</b>		<b>51,900</b>	4,200
Orientation	1,500	0	
Residential Support	1,200	0	
Campus Life Awards	1,000	0	
Legal Clinic	9,700	3,200	
Tax Clinic	4,000	-1,000	
Bicycle Safety	1,000	0	
Cabaret	1,000	1,000	
University Café'	1,000	1,000	
WUSB 90.1 FM	1,000	0	
Volunteer Ambulance Corps	1,500	0	
Child Care	12,000	0	
NYPIRG	12,000	0	
Misc. Grants	5,000	0	
<b>Program Funding</b>		<b>141,000</b>	6,500
Student Clubs and Organizations	4,000	0	
General Cultural and Social Events	12,000	-3,000	
Speaker Series and Conferences	20,000	5,000	
Departmental Allocations	5,000	1,000	
Resource Access Project (RAP)	90,000	0	
Inter-University Doctoral Consortium	5,000	2,000	
Seminar/Workshop			
Travel	2,000	500	
Recreation	3,000	1,000	
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>		<b>201,800</b>	10,700
<b>Total Operational Expenses</b>		<b>84,600</b>	14,500
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$ 286,400</b>	25,200
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 247,000</b>		
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 286,400</b>		
<b>Projected Surplus/Deficit (5)</b>	<b>-\$39,400</b>		

