

GSO Senate – Minutes – April 10, 2007
The meeting begins with 19 Senators and 4 Executives

1) Welcome Remarks

- a. The President welcomes the Senators to the meeting. The Executive Council has no resolutions to bring 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) Presentation by Freewheel

- a. Adam Ehmer from Freewheel presents examples of how the money from the Senate has helped the campus community. Freewheel can distribute about 30-50 safety packs with helmets and bike lights with the \$500 received from the Senate. If we can set up an account through GSO to buy wholesale, we can get better prices. We would like to promote them.
- b. *Sen. Bonsra (Pharmacology)*. Asks if they will be free to graduate students and Adam confirms that this is the case. He also suggests that the packs could be subsidized rather than free, but it would still be a bargain for students. Freewheel is in the basement of the Union Rm. 024, close to the NYPIRG office and the SINC site in case anyone wants more information.
- c. The Vice-President requests that Senators relay this information to students, especially bike commuters. There is a bike advisory group, so if you know of any problems with the bike routes, please let us know. fwcoord@gmail.com is the email for Freewheel.
- d. *Sen. Schiller (Physics)* stated that there are not enough bike racks around campus for bikes.
- e. The Vice-President agreed and added that we should reclaim abandoned bicycles. The bike advisory group wants to get going to reduce traffic.
- f. *Sen. Naydan (English)* says that *Sen. Pearson (Art)* wrote an article on the Graduate Magazine about Freewheel and Senators should check it out.

5) Smoking Ban Report

- a. The Secretary reports that that Smoking Ban was defeated at the University Senate by a vote of 16-17-2 due to the efforts of *Sen. Schiller (Physics)*, *Sen. Woulfin (History)*, the Senate, the Executive Board, and members of the USG. The arguments that the Secretary presented before the University Senate were more persuasive due to the actions of these people, such as the repeated USG and GSO resolutions.
- b. The President thanks the Secretary for his work on the issue.

6) Campus Life Awards

- a. The President reports that campus life awards will be given out soon and we are asking for nominations. There are many categories and we will send these to you via email. Please respond to it and send in your nominations. We will send a list of categories and please reply to the GSO email account.

7) NAGPS Conference

- a. The Vice-President and President went to the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students conference at MIT for the NE Chapter two weeks ago. They were very impressed that the GSO is so active. We also want to start an ambassadorial initiative. Many other schools have benefits because they are members of NAGPS. We are not members, but we are seeing if it is worth graduate student money.

8) Budget Committee

- a. *Sen. Moore (Economics)* presents financials for the Budget Committee in the Treasurer's absence. The Speaker Series line has been overspent and the overflow came from the surplus. We expect an increase in the activity fee income. Interest from our accounts is also up, from FSA projections. All other income stays the same. Under expenses, we do not expect to spend as much as is budgeted, so we will cut that. Phone lines have been cut down as well.
- b. The consortium line will fund students who want to take classes in Manhattan by subsidizing their LIRR tickets. There was a discussion about what the nature of this will be: whether it is only for students who live near Stony Brook or for people who only take classes at the SB-Manhattan campus or for anyone who takes a class in the Consortium.
- c. The new Wellness Center line describes that we will pay for half of the cost of participation in their activities. Intramural fees are fully reimbursed. This is a capped line, so first come, first serve.
- d. *Sen. Schiller (Physics)* asks how much RAP is used. President says that the line is almost always spent fully, but no one has been denied funding because it is not a capped line.
- e. LACS presents to request \$1550. The Budget recommends funding in the full amount. This is the first time that the conference will be in Manhattan and the first time that it is a two-day conference. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* makes a Motion to approve funding in the full amount. *Sen. Naydan (English)* seconds the Motion. The motion passes by unanimous consent. Everyone is invited: the conference is free to Stony Brook students.

9) Social Concerns Committee

- a. The Vice President presents a Pilot Virtual Forum: like a blog, but it is not just one-way. Administrators will respond. The pilot will run only with graduate students. We need to establish a good tone, so that they go ahead with it. The Quality of Life Survey attracted 200 responses. We still need a survival guide editor.
- b. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* asks about access to the Forum and the Vice President responds that students can access it from on campus only. *Sen. Woulfin* says that this is problematic. The Vice President says that eventually students have to

come to campus, so they can post when they are on campus. We are the test crowd. We have to create a username/password to use the Forum.

10) Elections Committee

- a. There will be one referenda, "I approve the following document as the new GSO Constitution." Accompanying it will be wording to explain the changes.
- b. There are also some changes to the Election By-Laws recommended by the Rules and Constitution Committee, including limiting the election from 7 days to 5 days. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* makes a Motion to approve the changes to the Election By-laws and the ballot. *Sen. Bonsra (Pharmacology)* seconds the Motion. The Motion passes by unanimous consent.
- c. The four candidates are Ryan Soule for President, Ruchi Gupta for Vice President, Miranda Moore for Treasurer, and Eran Shor for Secretary.

11) Rules and Constitution Committee

- a. The Speaker announces all of the changes to the Constitution and will make them available to the Senate via listserv.

12) GSELF Committee

- a. *Sen. Rob Gersch (Genetics)* makes himself available to answer any questions on behalf of the committee and to implore members of the Senate to volunteer to be on the committee. Three people need to be on the committee. GSELF makes short-term loans available to graduate students.
- b. The Speaker says the committee has done a great job and it is an important committee.
- c. *Sen. Schiller (Physics)* volunteers for the committee. The committee appointment is approved by unanimous consent.

13) Housing Committee

- a. *Sen. Woulfin (History)* states that the GSO website now has many housing resources.
- b. There will be a 3.3% rent increase at Chapin and a 3% in rent at Schomburg for next year, which is better than most years.
- c. Work orders follow up forms for maintenance repairs at all campus apartments now have to be left in the apartment when no one is at home. They must report what they did, who was there, and at what time. This will hopefully solve many problems in Schomburg and Chapin.
- d. The Task Force on Graduate and Professional Housing is now investigating new on campus housing for medical students and families, which is good because it will lessen the number of students vying for off-campus housing.
- e. There were 237 responses to the housing survey, which is a positive development.
- f. Long Island Housing Services will be doing a workshop on tenants rights on campus in April. An email will be sent out about to the listserv.

14) GSEU Liaison Committee

- a. The President states that Victor cannot be here, but next decision-making body meeting will be on 4/15 11-3pm in the SAC. The next general meeting is Wednesday at 7:30pm in the GSO office, to prepare for the DMB meeting. This information has been sent to all TA's and GA's.

15) NYPIRG

- a. Scott Zotto reports that there will be an investigation of 21st century con artists: websites & others who want to take advantage of people. This is a serious problem and we should be vigilant.

16) Motion to adjourn

- a. *Sen. Naydan (English)* makes a Motion to adjourn the meeting. *Sen. Hamilton (Psychology)* seconds the Motion. The Motion passes by unanimous consent.

Respectfully Submitted,
Louis Esparza