

November 9th 2004 GSO Senate Meeting Minutes

The Senate meeting was called to order at 6:00PM with the GSO Vice-President Monicca Santhanelson presiding in the absence of the Speaker Andrei Antonenko. All the executives except the Speaker were present. There was a quorum of 20 senators.

The following items are added to the agenda:

1) Add 'Lounge Committee Report' as item (c) under Standing Committee Reports

2) Add 'GSEU' as item (b) under New Business

Aryeh Grossman made a motion to approve the agenda with the changes. Seconded by Andrea Green. The motion passes unanimously.

The following changes are made to the October senate meeting minutes

1) Under 'Appointment of new members to University Committees', the senator nominee for the University Senate is Daria and the Graduate Council nominee is Luigi.

Aryeh Grossman made a motion to approve the minutes with the changes. Seconded by Danielle Royer. The motion passes unanimously.

Monicca informed the Senate that Doug Little, the campus police representative cannot make it to the meeting. The question and answer session will not take place.

Appointment of new members to the Standing Committees

Krista is nominated to the Social Concerns Committee. Grossman made a motion to approve. Seconded by Andrew Farke. The motion passes unanimously.

Appointment of new members to the University Committees

Andreavia Leskovjan is nominated to Honorary Degrees. Andrew Farke made a motion to approve. Seconded by Grossman. The motion passes unanimously.

Student-Faculty-Staff Retreat Report

The GSO President, Prasanna Kumar Santharam-Thoguluva, presented the Student-Faculty-Staff report. He described the issues that were discussed during the retreat. Grossman asked him if the low funding in SUNY has been discussed. Prasanna replied that since this issue does not fit into this year's theme for the retreat, it has not been discussed.

Committee Reports

a) Budget Committee Report

Rong Su presented the Budget Committee report. She informed the Senate that the application deadline for funding applications is December 5th midnight.

The following funding requests were discussed:

1) Request to fund \$150 of the publicity line for the Festival of Lights: Nasia Whittenberg, the representative, gave an introduction to the Festival of Lights. Grossman wanted to know if they have approached any undergraduate organizations. Nasia said that most of their funding came from undergraduate organizations. Grossman asked her what the GSO money would be used for. Nasia replied that it will be used for publicity, as was recommended by the Budget Committee. Grossman asked here if there would be any off-campus community involvement. Nasia replied that it would only be on-campus communities. Grossman made a motion to approve \$150 for the event. Seconded by Tarah. The motion passes unanimously.

2) Request to fund \$700 for the Diwali party: The IGSA representative Vipul Kuchhal and the Club OM representative Usha gave an introduction of the Diwali party. The admission is \$5 for undergraduates and free for graduate students. Gina asked them how they would differentiate between undergraduates and graduates. They said that students would be required to present a printout from the SOLAR system. Monicca asked them why it was free for graduate students. They replied that there are two undergraduate clubs involved and the undergraduate participation is expected to be much higher than the graduate student participation. The undergraduate clubs SASA and club OM are giving complimentary tickets to IGSA, which is a graduate club, in return for financial support. Chad Bender commented that it was not exactly complimentary as IGSA is asking the GSO to pay for those tickets. Andrew Farke wanted to know where the money from the ticket sales went. The undergraduate representative said that the money goes to the Undergraduate Student Government (USG). USG regulations stipulate that they cannot use the ticket money for this event. Dumaine Williams said that there is not enough time to publicize the event. Vipul told him that the posters will be put up by tomorrow and messages will be sent via voice mails. Monicca said that IGSA already received \$2000 from GSO, out of the entire event budget of \$15000. Rong asked Vipul if IGSA would be using the \$500 club allocation. Vipul replied that it would probably be used towards another event in the future. Grossman said that IGSA is asking GSO to buy the tickets for the graduate students. But there is not enough time to publicize the event. So IGSA can sell the tickets to the students because the money is not being used wisely. Vipul told him that efforts to publicize the event are on. Billy Wharton said that since not all clubs use the money, we can fund the event. He asked for the numbers from the previous year. Monicca told him that the previous year, the funding allocation was \$15000, of which \$7500 was used per semester. Rong said that this semester, the funding allocations until now total \$3750, out of the \$7500 per semester. Tarah said that we can carry over any leftover money to the next year. Tarah made a motion not to fund the event. Seconded by Harry Theman. 8 senators in favor, 10 opposed and 3 abstaining. The motion fails. Grossman made a motion to fund \$350 provided IGS charges graduate students for the tickets. The motion is seconded. 16 senators in favor, 3 opposed. The motion passes.

3) Request to fund \$300 for the Arts department's Lucio Pozzi speaker series: The Arts department representative told the senate that out of the \$300, \$200 is for the speaker and \$100 is for refreshments. Dumaine Williams asked the representative why the Arts department could not spend their own money for refreshments. She said that they do not have the money. Grossman said that the \$350 approved for the Diwali party is going to

end up in refreshments anyway. So we might as well fund this event. Grossman made a motion to fund \$300. Seconded by Angeliki. The motion passes unanimously.

4) Request to fund \$615 for the Tanger Outlet Black Friday trip by CARA: CARA President Aravind explained the purpose of this trip to the senate. Gina Chiarella asked him if the Chapin office has provided any funding. Aravind told her that Chapin office did not fund the event but they let CARA use their printing facilities for publicity. Monicca asked him if CARA has approached anyone else for funding. Aravind told her that they have not approached anyone yet. He also said that if the number of people interested in the trip goes up, they might have to come back to GSO for additional funding. Grossman asked him to approach the graduate school first. Tarah made a motion to fund \$615 for the event. Seconded by Stefan Hyman. The motion passes unanimously.

b) Social Concerns Committee Report

Monicca presented the Social Concerns Committee report. She informed the senate that the campus police representative could not make it to the meeting.

c) Lounge Committee Report

Angeliki-Field Pollatau presented the Lounge Committee report. She reported that there was some equipment left over from the Spot, which was the graduate lounge before the Café was opened, that the Café could not use. Based on FSA quotes, the equipment was sold for \$1465.00. The money goes into the miscellaneous income of the GSO budget. Since the money came from the Spot, the Lounge Committee would like to use it to buy equipment for the Café. Grossman wanted to know what it would cost to buy the necessary equipment. Angeliki replied that the café manager's estimate was about \$3000.00 but the right now, the Lounge Committee would only buy some of the equipment. Grossman wanted an itemized budget of what it is going to cost. Angeliki replied that the Lounge Committee did not present it to the Budget Committee yet. But they need the money soon so as to buy the equipment. The Café would need a cold table and a small convection oven right now. Andrew Farke made a motion to postpone the request to the next meeting. Grossman proposed an amendment that GSO pays them \$1500.00 now and get more money later on is conditional on presenting an itemized budget to the Budget Committee. Andrew accepted the amendment. Seconded by Tarah Dame. 17 senators in favor and 1 opposed, with Angeliki abstaining. The motion passes.

Old Business

a) Student-Faculty-Staff Retreat money allocation

GSO approved \$400 for the retreat conditional on they sending GSO an email so that we can publicize the event. The email was not sent within the stipulated timeframe. Grossman said that they did not even send a graduate representative. They sent an undergraduate representative instead. Angeliki said that this has been going on for the past three years. The graduate students were ignored even during the student life awards. Grossman made a motion not to fund the event, as they did not meet the stipulations. Seconded by Tarah Dame. The motion passes unanimously.

New Business

a) Webmaster Issues

For this year, GSO created a joint office manager-webmaster position because of the budget deficit. But Christa, the current office manager, does not have sufficient webmaster skills even after having received some training. The executive board wants to hire a new webmaster with a salary of \$1000 to be docked from the office manager's salary, and modify the office manager's contract accordingly. The executive board wanted the senate's advice on this issue. Grossman said that since the executive board hired the office manager, it is the board's mistake and so the board cannot punish the office manager. Angeliki said that this should not have been brought to the senate. If an employee is not qualified, the proper procedure is to give a warning and if there is no improvement, fire the employee. Not performing the job to satisfaction is not grounds for pay change. The GSEU representative, Billy Wharton, agreed with Angeliki that GSO cannot reduce the office manager's salary. Grossman said that the office manager needs to be given a written warning. Nashia Whittenberg said that the proper procedure is to give a warning and initiate employee review after 30 days. She also said that the contract cannot be changed until it expires. Monicca said that the contract has a provision for revision by the executive board. Prasanna said that the executive board is responsible and that the board thought that they can train the office manager when they hired her. Angeliki said that if the board wants to pay the webmaster from the office manager's salary, they would have to modify the budget, which cannot be done without giving a notice. Angeliki wanted to know if there is anything that the office manager has been asked to do and has not done. The office manager has completed all her assignments. Grossman said that the executive board was aware that Christa does not have the required skills and still hired her. The board knew that they would have to train her. Grossman made a motion to deduct \$20 per month from the 5 executives' salaries and pay the webmaster. Seconded by Angeliki. 1 senator in favor, 10 opposed and 6 abstaining. The motion fails. Angeliki asked Rong how much money is available in the miscellaneous line. Rong replied that there is \$1500 remaining in that line. Angeliki made a motion to use \$500 from miscellaneous for the webmaster. Seconded by Tarah Dame. The motion passes unanimously.

b) GSEU

GSEU representative, Billy Wharton, reported that negotiations for a new contract are going on with the state. He informed the senate that GSEU holds membership meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. GSEU is advocating a boycott of Jasmine, the Asian food court, as it does not use union labor. He said that Jasmine's employees want to talk to the union.

Nashia made an announcement about her organization's community development and diversity challenge grants.

Grossman made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Dumaine Williams. Motion passes unanimously. The meeting is adjourned.