

GAPSA Assembly Meeting Minutes

February 2nd, 2009, Uptown Campus LBC 203 Stibbs – 7:00pm

I. Call to Order

- 7:06 p.m.

II. Roll Call

- Please see attendance list below

III. Approval of Minutes

- Approved unanimously

IV. President's Report (Jerina Pillert)

A. Dining Services Graduate Student Focus Group – FREE lunch

- Ten graduate/professional students are needed as part of a focus group. Please sign up and tell the members of your schools.
- Senator Nelson, GSSA and Senator Cancio, SBA volunteer

B. Bookstore Graduate Student Focus Group – Feb. 9th

- Five to seven graduate students are needed from 3:30-6:30 p.m.
- No volunteers; President Pillert will send an e-mail

C. March 2nd Meeting Downtown – Issue with parking

- The parking attendant downtown will not let us access the garages. Would you all prefer to have the meeting uptown due to parking difficulties?
- No, the Assembly prefers to have the meeting downtown.
- The time of the meeting is moved to 7:30 at the request of SBA.

D. Upcoming Elections – March 30th Assembly Meeting

- Think about any position on the GAPSA Executive Board that you might like. Feel free to contact the person who currently holds that position.

V. GAPSA Division Reports

A. School of Continuing Studies

- Not present

B. Graduate Business Council

- No report

C. Graduate Studies Student Association

- Our annual crawfish boil will be held April 17 in Audubon Park.

D. Medical School Student Association

- St. Baldrick's Day is on March 18!! Volunteers will have their heads shaved to support children with cancer.

E. Public Health and Tropical Medicine Student Government

- An meeting between GAPSA senators and SPHTM officers has taken place.
- There are unclaimed lockers that are up for grabs.
- The NO AIDS program is coming up.
- The Rock-n-Bowl mixer has been moved to March 3.
- We would like to open up a space in the auditorium for movie night.
- The Vagina Monologues is coming up soon.

F. Student Bar Association (Law School)

- Lots of events coming:
 - Spring Fling
 - Environmental Law Summit, April 3-4

- Human Rights film festival
 - MS Walk, April 4
- G. *Student Government Association of the School of Social Work*
- February 13 is “Fall in Love with the World” day. People from different ethnic backgrounds will be sharing food and socializing.
- H. *Biomedical Sciences Student Association*
- February 10-11, Nobel Prize winners will be speaking and presenting posters.
 - Planning a laser tag social

VI. Executive Council Reports

A. Executive VP: Erin Beyerstedt

- No report

B. Administrative VP: Andrew Tuozzolo

- The constitution will not be read tonight because there may be more changes, especially concerning the fiscal powers of the body. Specifically, we are trying to decide whether a simple majority or super-majority vote should be required in order to overturn the Finance Committee’s recommendation.
- Senator Wendt, SBA: A simple majority may be better because the body can make a more thorough decision than six or seven people.
- AVP: Please e-mail me if you have suggestions.

C. Downtown Campus VP: Katie Izenour

- No report

D. Treasurer: Kourtney Thomas

i. Conference Reserve Requests

a) L. Manning – Cognitive Neuroscience Society Ann. Meeting

- \$500 request
- Approved unanimously

b) S. Thornhill – John R. Brown Admiralty Moot Court Comp.

- \$1,710 request
 - Senator Nelson, GSSA: Why did the SBA give so little funding to this group?
 - Thornhill: The money was used for travel in the fall.
 - Senator Swabacker, SBA: SBA funding is allocated to student groups by population.
- Approved unanimously

c) M. Edwards – Frederick Douglas Moot Court Competition

- \$1,748 request
 - Senator McClary, MSG: Why is this group taking five people when the last group took only four?
 - Senator Swabacker, SBA: Different competitions require different numbers of people.
- Approved unanimously

d) A. Owings – PACE Environmental Law Conferences

- \$1,940 request
- Approved unanimously

ii. General Reserve Requests

a) L. Ellis – 14th Annual Summit on Enviro. Law and Policy

- \$11,918.50 request
 - Ellis: This summit is truly interdisciplinary and will pertain to everyone on campus. Summit events, with the exception of the banquet, will be free for all Tulane students, staff, and faculty. The request has more than doubled from the \$5,000 that we requested last year because of our new marketing strategy. We are making flyers and targeting nonprofits and the media. Our graphic designer gave us a 50% discount. The summit will bring attention to both Tulane and New Orleans. Issues to be discussed include what “green” will mean for the Obama administration and in disaster areas. We are approaching USG, corporations, and environmental groups for funding as well.
 - Senator McClary, MSG: How many registrants last year? Ellis: Two hundred registrants; I cannot give you an exact number of participants because it was free to students.
 - Senator Nelson, GSSA: Why is McCabbin flying first class? Ellis: To cut his fee by several thousand dollars.
 - Senator Vincenti, SPHTM: Are the lunch and the banquet free. Ellis: Lunch, yes. The banquet, no. However, we are trying to get Tulane to pay for it. Attorney pay \$250 to attend the summit, and that fee includes the banquet.
 - Senator McClary, MSG: Only ninety-five attorneys will attend this year? Ellis: That is our goal. There are lots of costs up front, so any registration fees collected after we reach our goal will be reserved for paying for next year’s summit up front. Maybe we will not have to come to GAPSAs next year.
 - Finance Committee recommended approving this request contingent upon USG. If USG awards any funding, our contribution will decrease by the amount USG awards.
- Finance Committee’s recommendation to approve with contingency passes unanimously.

E. Secretary: Megan Holt

- No report

VII. Committee Reports

A. Grad Club Committee (Marc Blainey) – Grad Night!

- The administration says that we need to demonstrate a need, so we want to have a grad club night. All graduate and professional students

will be invited, and we have set a tentative date for March 5. It will possibly be located in the LBC Ballroom. We are going to check into catering; we have considered Mediterranean food or Indian food. We will provide a cash bar, but non-alcoholic drinks will be free. We will ask for funds from GAPSA so that students do not have to pay a cover. We will be asking schools for a head count of those planning to attend. The vacated anthropology building could be ours, but some renovations would be needed.

- Senator Cancio, SBA: If you build it, people will come. Great idea.
 - Proxy Van der Becken, SW: Our graduate students would come.
 - Senator Swabacker, SBA: You should perhaps not hold the grad night so close to Mardi Gras. Be sure to advertise.
 - Senator Kaplan, BMSSA: What else would it have? It might close if there is not enough interest. Blainey: Especially for first year students, it could be a source of community and a chance to meet people outside their departments. Hopefully, in addition to the pub/coffee shop, it would also house a computer lab, GAPSA offices, and meeting rooms.
 - Senator Bennett, GSSA: Would it be smoke-free. Blainey: All buildings on Tulane's campus are required to be smoke-free.
 - Proxy Shiaari, GBC: Would it be for Tulane graduate/professional students only. Blainey: Guests would be welcome, provided that the guests are 21 or older.
 - Blainey: Would you all come out for the grad club night?
 - President Pillert: Would you all have any problem with subsidizing the grad club night rather than holding a spring social?
 - Unanimous show of support for the grad club night.
- B. Health Insurance Committee Update (Matt Austin)
- Our six-week goal is to get support from the university senate.
 - Brian Mitchell will be our liaison to Risk Management. Hopefully, we will have a meeting with Risk Management in late February to discuss what we want.

VIII. ASB President's Report (Tim Cullen)

- Crawfest posters are ready! Please post them on the downtown campus. I will go downtown and post them, too.
- There was a University Senate meeting at which President Cowan addressed the recent article in the *Hullabaloo* about AAUP's post-Katrina censuring of Tulane. Cowan said that he responded to any correspondence from the AAUP that he "deemed relevant."
- Head count stabilization is occurring university-wide. All staff positions that are currently vacant will not be included in next year's budget.
- ASB meeting will take place next Monday. The agenda will be ready tomorrow.

IX. USG President's Report (Margaret Walker)

- A student leader event, Tulane To-Do, will be held to talk about problems and possible solutions, as well as to foster communication between leaders.
- USG is still restructuring. Soon we will bring our plans to the University Senate.
- A new office, OCRA, will provide resources for students living off-campus
- We have several new ways to communicate: a blog, a facebook page, and twitter.
- We have appreciated the interaction with GAPSA this year.

X. Adviser Report (Jered Bocage)

- No report

XI. Old Business

- None

XII. New Business

A. ASB Committees

- We need volunteers for the Constitutional Appeals Committee.
 - Senator Wendt, SBA, and AVP Tuozzolo volunteer
- Volunteers also needed to put together the ASB election process.
 - Senator Swabacker, SBA, AVP Tuozzolo, and Senator McClary, MSG, volunteer

B. Flex Account Proposal – Medical School

- See written proposal in meeting packet for details.
- Senator Swabacker, SBA: What if we needed more funding than was in both our budget and our flex account? Could we still make a reserve request? Senator McClary, MSG: Yes, and the reserve would grow.
- Senator Kaplan, BMSSA: Why did you choose 5% as the percentage the schools would be required to give to the reserve fund? Senator Hambly, MSG: It seemed fair, but we are flexible.
- Senator Reilly, SPHTM: Leadership changes so rapidly in some schools that there is no opportunity for long-term planning. A one-year flex account does not seem significant.
- Senator Vincenti, SPTHM: Two-year planning out of our own budget seems good and productive. We need to see some numbers, though.
- President Pillert: \$67,554 was returned to the reserve last year. So far, \$65,000 has been allocated and will be spent this year.
- ASB President Cullen: Five percent of your budget last year was \$50,000, so your reserve would have collected less using this proposal.
- Senator Wendt, SBA: Why can the money only be held for one year? Why not longer? Senator McClary, MSG: People want the funds they contributed spent while they are students.
- Senator Kaplan, BMSSA: This account idea may not work, but maybe we could consider altering the rules of the reserve fund.
- Senator Hambly, MSG: The Flex Account would be a part of the reserve fund. The GAPSA Treasurer would keep track of all schools' flex accounts. It encourages the schools to take responsibility for their finances.
- ASB President Cullen: We need to see numbers from the past few years. If the school gives back, say, \$20,000, would all that money automatically be considered part of the flex account? Senator Hambly, MSG: You could make the flex account optional. Cullen: Do you have to make a request to your school government to receive funds from the flex account? Hambly: Reserve requests would be the same as always.
- President Pillert: Making the flex account optional on a school-by-school basis will not work. The 5% will have to be a line item on everyone's budget in order for this proposal to work.

- Allison Brannen, SPHTM: I am concerned about the workload that this proposal adds to school treasurers' jobs. Also, how are we regulating who can ask for what? The transition from year to year might also create a mismanagement of funds. Senator Hambly, MSG: The one-year rule would prevent mismanagement.
- Allison Brannen, SPHTM: It could present issues with the schools' budgets.
- Senator Reilly, SPHTM: It could create strife at the GAPSA level.
- Secretary Holt: As well as strife within the individual schools.
- President Pillert: What is going to happen if the GAPSA Treasurer disagrees with the school treasurer, or when the members of the school disagree with their officers? Senator Hambly: The internal problems would just move.
- Senator Wendt, SBA: The alternative, the situation now, is not working. The schools feel that they MUST spend their money and spend it on frivolous things as a result.
- EVP: Not ALL of the schools are spending everything. Some are returning money to the GAPSA reserve fund and then making requests from that fund.
- Senator McClary, MSG: We returned money to the reserve, but then when we asked for it back for capital improvements, we did not get all of it.
- Senator Swabacker, SBA: How do we fund capital improvements? Also, are our budgets reduced if we do not spend?
- Senator Kaplan, BMSSA: Every year the schools' budgets must be approved by GAPSA. We should already be responsible by the line items in our budgets. How is this plan promoting more responsibility? Senator Hambly, MSG: Multi-year planning is prevented by the current structure. Kaplan: But ANY need can be presented to GAPSA as a reserve fund request at any time.
- Proxy Van der Becken, SW: Social Work students only attend Tulane for sixteen months. Capital improvements will never happen. For our school, this proposal will not help.
- Allison Brannen, SPHTM: It seems like a flat tax to me. The larger schools will be able to do this more easily than the smaller schools.
- Treasurer Thomas: I have never seen an instance of complete refusal of funds for any capital improvement request. Why not reduce student fees instead of changing the way that the reserve fund is structured?
- EVP: For schools who do spend all their money, how is the GAPSA reserve fund not growing? Also, keep in mind that the majority of the Medical School's capital improvement request was approved. At GAPSA it was presented as "we gave money to the reserve, now we want it back."
- Senator Hambly, MSG: I tried to propose the flex account as something that would not just benefit MSG.
- ASB President Cullen: We need to look at how much is put back vs. how much is spent. If we spend more than we take in, the reserve fund will not grow and we will not have a rainy day fund.
- Senator Hambly, MSG: This proposal mandates contributing to the reserve.

- AVP: Let's see if there is a negative or positive flow this year before considering it.
- ASB President Cullen: We should consider it on a one-year trial basis, at best.
- President Pillert: Keep in mind that, after tonight's allocations, we have allocated \$85,000 and only took in \$65,000.
- Secretary Holt: We have been debating this issue for forty-five minutes, and I do not think we are going to resolve anything tonight. Motion to table the discussion until next meeting.
- Motion approved, discussion tabled.

XIII. Open Forum

- Nothing

XIV. Announcements *A. ASB Meeting – Monday Feb. 9th 7pm Kendall Cram*

- Please either attend or send a proxy

XV. Adjournment

- 8:45 p.m.

Attendance

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Business School (GBC)

Noor Shiaari (proxy, Brigham Hall)

Graduate Studies (GSSA)

Joyce Bennett

Jeremy Nelson

Scott Jareb

Lisa Hua

Medical School (MSG)

Cain McClary

Chris Stark

Davis Ogitani

Bryan Hambly

Biomedical Sciences (BMSSA)

Bryan Kaplan

Public Health and Tropical Medicine

Marco Vincenti

Tamala Gondwe

Katie Reilly

Laura DeBoer

Law School (SBA)

Melissa Swabacker

Sara Lewis

Guillermo Cancio

George Wendt

Camille Dizon

Social Work (SSWSGA)

Tim Van der Becken (proxy, T. Singleton)

Matt Langedyke