



**Graduate Student Congress**  
Associated Student Government  
University of Arkansas

**MINUTES**

**November 18, 2015**  
**Graduate Education Building**  
**Auditorium**  
**6:00 PM**

- I. **Call to Order at 6:07.**
- II. Attendance
  - A. 32/41 minutes present; quorum met.
- III. Approve Minutes, Oct. 15 General Meeting
  - A. No opposition.
- IV. Approve Agenda
  - A. No opposition.
- V. Special Orders
  - A. Adviser Amanda Cantu (3 minutes)
    1. No report.
  - B. ASG Adviser Rainer Gall (3 minutes)
    1. A couple of reminders: 2 applications opening this week. The first is for the Liaison to Off-Campus and Non-Traditional Student Relations. Please send interested parties our way. You may not serve in this position because you serve in the GSC.
    2. The other application is open to all. We are trying to hire an ASG Historian. We need someone to track down 40 years of ASG history. It is a stipended position.
    3. A friendly reminder: Please clean up after yourselves this evening.
    4. No questions.
  - C. Kim Johnson, Chartwells (5 minutes)
    1. Jeter: Last meeting we had Andrew Lipson from Chartwells. We had asked about graduate student meal plans, or more affordable packages, etc. Kim Johnson here is Lipson's representative. When Rodica gets back we are going to look

at a survey with a random representative sample. If you do receive the survey, your timely response will be helpful.

2. Johnson: The only thing I would add about the survey is that all of our choices we make are customer-insights driven. As customers on this campus, you can help us make these decisions through our survey. Please encourage those who receive the survey to respond.

3. No questions.

D. Fulbright Caucus report (3 minutes)

1. Trea.: We met with Dean Shields about a week and a half ago. Dr. Shields was once the Dean of the Graduate School. There are a couple of takeaways:
2. Those with offices in Duncan or Stone: We will propose that the university add signage and nameplates to help students find offices. That will be turned over to the facilities. If there are issues in other colleges, let us know.
3. Dean Shields was also supportive of having at least one graduate student on search committees for faculty. We want to see if there is support in other colleges as well.
4. We also discussed some long-term goals about GA funding. We hope to work with the chancellor about new funding opportunities.

5. No questions.

E. Engineering Caucus report (3 minutes)

1. Gilley: We met with Dean English. Everyone in our caucus was at the meeting. Most of our discussion was about a social lunch to find out what the needs of graduate engineering students are. There is not as much need for office space, but more need for lab space. The engineering college is willing to fund that. We may need a few extra hands, however, because there are only 3 members from engineering in GSC. We are thinking about a sit-down food, as opposed to grab-and-go. We want them to stay and talk with us.
2. No questions.

VI. Reports

A. Speaker Scout Johnson (5 minutes)

1. Grad School Committees
  - a. Many of these committees have been nominated by the Grad School. Deans Koski and Needy have asked us to send them nominees for these 12 committees (e.g. IRB, Hazardous Waste). Those nominees only need to be graduate members; they do not need to be part of GSC.

- b. Is there any opposition to this? Or any thoughts?  
None. At some point we will add that to our standing rules.
  - 2. Open Cabinet Position: Off-Campus/Non-Traditional Student Affairs
  - 3. Elections Commissioner Position open
  - 4. 2 Vacant Justice positions in December
    - a. One is open now; the other will open after a justice graduates in Dec.
    - b. If you want to be in these positions, you will have to resign your position in the GSC.
  - 5. Office Hours
    - a. At our second meeting, this body passed the standing rules to have every member hold at least one office hour.
    - b. Each member agreed to this rule when we voted to change the standing rules. I want to see everyone at their office hours, and I want everyone signed up for office hours. Unfortunately, it looks like we may have to amend standing rules to add some punitive measure.
    - c. Any thoughts? None.
- B. Vice Speaker Madeleine Forrest (3 minutes)
  - 1. Grad Student Survey
    - a. The survey was approved by IRB. We had to get approval from the university because knowledge gained from this survey will be used in legislation. We were ultimately exempted. We are now putting this into Qualtrics.
    - b. We will run this from Dec. 1-Dec. 14. Many of you submitted questions to this. It encompasses all aspects of grad student life. If only you fill it out (which you should), it won't help. We want to be able to write legislation based on these data. Please email those in your dept. and ask them to fill it out. We will also send this through Dean Koski, but we know that doesn't catch everybody.
    - c. Questions?
    - d. Howard: Do we have access to university twitter accounts?
    - e. Forrest: We could get it through student affairs?
    - f. Cantu: We can put this on the grad school twitter, but no access to the university account.
  - 2. College Caucuses
    - a. Please update us when you meet.

- b. Move to extend speaker's time. No opposition.
  - 3. We serve grad students through legislation to effect change. I think we are doing well on this. This is the first time our committees have actually worked in this body. We have done very well. The other side of us is the side others see: programming and events. Unfortunately, I think that is how most of the campus knows about us.
    - a. Move to extend by 2 minutes. No opposition.
    - b. We really need this done by the end of the semester. We do not expect you at every event. We are impressed that you are here and attend your committee meetings. But try to add one more event, like a grad student lunch.
- C. Treasurer Arley Ward (1 minute)
  - 1. Finance Committee: We are wrapping up fact-finding efforts to look at how other grad student bodies can finance research and travel grants. We are benchmarking against key institutions.
  - 2. We are working on awards to give at the end of the year. Please email me.
  - 3. No questions.
- D. Secretary Mark Nabors (1 minute)
  - 1. No report.
- E. External Relations and Marketing Chair, Jade Newsome (1 minute)
  - 1. Everyone is invited to like our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter. The more people who follow us, the more visible we are.
  - 2. Speaker: There is a link to those at the end of the agenda.
- F. International Concerns Chair, Supriya Thote (1 minute)
  - 1. It is International Education Week. Please stop by events, tell people about GSC.
- G. Social Chair, Jessica Guinn (1 minute)
  - 1. We have a grad lunch tomorrow in Ozark Hall in teh Grad Student Lounge. We are having Panera from 11:30-12:30. Next month, coffee and donuts will be the 8th, and lunch will be the 10th. Look for an email.
  - 2. I also need help with events. I am creating a Google Doc that you can sign up on.
- H. Parliamentarian, Frankc Berlanga Medina (1 minute)
  - 1. No report.
- I. Graduate Student Life Committee Chair, Rodica Lisnic (1 minute)
  - 1. Absent.
- J. Facilities Committee Chair, Philip Gilley (1 minute)

1. We are beginning research on housing and office space. The grad survey will help a lot but we also need to benchmark against other schools.

## VII. Old Business

- A. GSC Resolution 6: A Resolution in Support of Tuition and Fee Transparency for Dual-Degree Seeking Graduate and Professional Students: Secretary Mark Nabors, Legislative Affairs Director Rachel Spencer, and Representative Allie Honey (15 minutes)
  1. Executive Cabinet Recommendation: Pass
  2. Nabors - The university doesn't have a written policy about how these fees are assessed, they have simply found out that they are charged the higher rate. Please read the letter attached to the legislation as it explains the issues in the students' own words. Also, Honey did research on how other schools deal with this issue (it is also attached to the legislation). A large number of the schools have a pretty basic policy - the tuition is charged depending on what school (law or graduate) the class is in. At the very least, all these universities have a written policy. The final appendix is from the American Bar Association. One of the necessary disclosures from law schools is to give students a complete statement of all tuition and fees.
  3. Nabors - This resolution charges Rep. Nabors, Spence and Honey to continue to work with administration to get a written policy and for the university to reimburse all those affected adversely. Listed at the bottom are all the admins who will receive a copy of this legislation. Those affected cannot get past Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Terry Martin. Dean Leeds is also working on this issue.
  4. Questions - Rep. Howard - why haven't they just come up with a written policy? Martin's response is that we don't have one, let's write one. But, as Nabors says, that's not fair to the students facing this issue right now.
  5. Regarding Appendix B - do all these schools have a written policy? No, out of these 10 about half have a written policy. But, most of them also split the fees.
  6. How do you expect to overcome the fact that alumni might want to be reimbursed as well? They told the current students that this is the first time it's been brought up. The university may be opening themselves up to liability but perhaps they should have a written statement. It's in the university's best interest to solve this now. It is doubtful that the alumni would have legal standing in order to file a suit as

this policy no longer affects them. Getting reimbursed is best case scenario for these students.

7. Why does UALR have a policy but not UA-Fayetteville?  
UALR has more degree-seeking students. Main part of argument - if UARL can do it, we should be able to as well.
8. Is there a precedent for students being reimbursed? Not sure - it wasn't addressed.
9. When did these other universities come up with policies?  
Not sure about the timeline or when they were established. Most policies were found in up-to-date handbooks.
10. Do you have any statistics on how many students this would impact? How much would it cost the university? At the UofA it is impacting 9 students. It's about \$1500 over two years for a law student. It's not impacting a large population.
11. Move to amend to include The Ohio State University in Appendix B and amend the section on the University of Alabama. Amendments pass
12. Debate - None.
13. Move to question. Seconded.
14. Vote: 30 members voting: 100% approval.
- 15. The Resolution passes unanimously.**

#### VIII. New Business

- A. ASG Joint Bill 2: Executive Committee Equal Representation Act of 2015: ASG Treasurer Raymond Todd (15 minutes)
  1. Currently the Speaker is invited to the executive committee by the ASG President. This will make the Speaker a formal member of this committee. The Speaker should have a permanent seat on the body.
  2. Burbridge: Why no one from the Judicial Branch.
  3. Todd: Separation of Powers. We do have separate leadership meetings which include the Chief Justice.
  4. No questions.
  5. Move to second reading. Seconded. No opposition.
- B. Second reading: ASG Joint Bill 2: Executive Committee Equal Representation Act of 2015: ASG Treasurer Raymond Todd (15 minutes)
  1. Todd: This has to go through both legislative bodies since it is changing code via proportional voting. It will then go to referendum.
  2. Wesolowski: Move to amend Line 15 to state "Of the ASG Code." Seconded. Objection. Amendment withdrawn.
  3. Wesolowski: Move to amend lines 15 and 28 to indicate these changes are in the Constitution. Seconded. No opposition.

4. Speaker: Any additional debate? See none we now move to a period of voting.
5. Vote: 30 members present: Passes 100%.
- 6. The Joint Bill Passes.**

IX. Open Discussion (15 minutes)

- a. Berlanga: Time limit for open discussion? Speaker: None currently.
- b. McMillian: I move to allot 15 minutes total. Second. No opposition.
- c. University of Missouri
  1. Speaker: We wanted to allow you to make a statement. Our body has not made a formal statement regarding the issues at Mizzou. We want your feedback, your concerns for our own campus.
  2. Sims: Do we just want to address the graduate student issues?
  3. Speaker: Since all of those issues are entangled, I do not believe it out of order to discuss any issues. Does anyone think we need to make a statement?
  4. Forrest: Have any other bodies made statements?
  5. Speaker: Most of them say they support graduate students, other speak to specific graduate student issues, or to specific racial issues.
  6. Newsome: President Bone has been trying to get a statement written on behalf of all ASG. Any updates?
  7. Speaker: I have not heard anything.
  8. Todd: All of the SEC presidents were discussing and trying to make a statement. I don't know if they have agreed on anything. Tanner is currently in Prague.
  9. Jeter: If this is an issue that seems to be concerning some folks, I would volunteer to be part of a taskforce/study group/discussion group/ etc. to begin to discuss this. We are currently in a good position because a new Chancellor is coming in. This taskforce would be able to discuss concerns with him in January. I would volunteer to do that.
  10. Speaker: If anyone is interested, please contact Garrett.
  11. Nabors: I believe it would be appropriate for us to make an independent statement on graduate student issues.
  12. Wesolowski: Has NAGPS made a statement?
  13. Speaker: No, they don't know what graduate students think. They have restructured advocacy efforts to address future concerns. But they are working on getting feedback now.
  14. McGhee: I would reiterate what Rep. Nabors said. I think it is a good idea for ASG to make a statement, but it would be good to pass something specific to graduate students.

15. Gilley: With that, I don't think it would be a bad idea to let NAGPS know what we think, in addition to Mizzou.
16. Forrest: How would we go about writing this?
17. Speaker: I would write a statement, and share it with the body for thoughts, approval, etc.
18. Speaker: Is there anyone who thinks this a bad idea--to make a statement in support?
19. Howard: Is there a way to do it in conjunction with someone higher up, e.g., an administrator. A graduate student specific statement is valuable, but is there value in doing it in close ties with an administrator. For example, the Dean of the Graduate School?
20. Gilley: Our chancellor did put out a message about this.
21. Speaker: The message was focused exclusively on racial issues, and not graduate student issues. Ours would be specific to graduate student issues.
22. Feraro: Have we spoken with other SEC schools?
23. Speaker: Yes the presidents of SEC schools are trying to get a statement together. They will be issuing one along the lines of the Chancellor's statement last week.
24. Speaker: I will write a statement, and will check in with Deans Needy and Koski.

d. Meeting schedule

1. Speaker: In some ways, some representatives feel as if the Cabinet is deciding things behind closed doors, in secret, because we have decided some things without input. First, if that is the perception, I apologize. That is a failure on our part. If you ever believe we are doing things behind closed doors, please know that that is never our intent. OUR intent is to be open and receptive. The meeting schedule is quite constrained. We have Monday-Friday nights. We assume no one wants to meet on Friday night. We cannot meet Tuesday nights, unless it is 7:30 or later, because Senate meets then. And Rainer, the ASG adviser, must be at both meetings. That leaves Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. We chose Wednesday and Thursday. We alternate so you don't miss every meeting if you have class on one of those nights. We will send out a Doodle poll, and we will include Monday night. Please pick 2.
2. The other thing that came up was event scheduling. As the Vice Speaker said, it is important for you to be at events. We realized that we ask you to do extra things. So we made a decision that if you go to an event, that counts as your office hours. We try to set events at the beginning of the summer. We have been asked to allow all reps. to give input on when

events are set. I'm not sure how well that would work. But we are open to it. I open the floor to comments, questions, concerns, etc.

3. Feraro: It feels like I'm going against the Great Oz. We should be prepared as possible when meeting with the Dean.
4. Move to extend time by 5 minutes. Seconded. No opposition.
5. Speaker: the purpose of that is to meet with students, and then meet with the Dean to make sure they are aware of those concerns. Those meetings are set by caucuses themselves.
6. Speaker: One other point was communication. Folks don't feel like they are getting enough communication from Exec. Some things that have been suggested are a Facebook group, GroupMe, Blackboard discussion board. Thoughts?
7. Forrest: I support the Facebook group idea.
8. Berlanga: I don't want to do GroupMe. The Facebook could be tricky with entering people in and out. Everyone uses blackboard. That sounds like its the more viable option.
9. Rep.: I would support blackboard because not everyone has Facebook or GroupMe.
10. Trea: You can read multiple threads via Blackboard.
11. Newsome: I support blackboard, but you do have info. from the Grad Student Listserv, Dean Koski's listserv, and our facebook and twitter accounts.
12. Speaker: For clarification, we would not send this info. out via listservs. They feel like there should be more communication between meetings.
13. McGee: Why not have one person on Cabinet who can bring these issues up?
14. Speaker: If I'm understanding correctly, we have a representative who can bring concerns to the cabinet meetings. I think the concern with that is it is still once per month. They feel like reps. need/want/deserve communication more than once per month.
15. Phillips: Myspace.
16. Speaker: Rep. Phillips cannot speak at meetings anymore. (laughter)
17. Wesolowski: Is there content on blackboard that is not available elsewhere.
18. Move to extend time by 5 minutes. Seconded. No opposition.
19. Wesolowski: I don't know if I have access to blackboard.
20. Speaker: With dissertation hours, you do have access.
21. Wesolowski: But is there any information that would not be available elsewhere?

22. Speaker: Discussions. But I don't know what other content might be added. But the general concern is communication.
23. Treat: I would like to express confidence in and appreciation for Cabinet. They put out a ton of extra time. We appreciate that.
24. Speaker: Let the record show that Rep. Treat is always allowed to speak. (Laughter)
25. Gilley: Is there a way to notify people of new content on Blackboard?
26. Speaker: There's an app.
27. Gilley: Could we still do a groupme, even if not everyone is on it?
28. Trea: I don't think that's a wise decision, because then you have two threads that are not communicating with each other.
29. Berlanga: What's the issue? No communication on agenda content? Or a space where reps. can dialogue together?
30. Speaker: Both are concerns.
31. McGee: For clarification, are we talking about no filters, completely open communication? Or are there strict guidelines?
32. Speaker: Thoughts?
33. Berlanga: As parliamentarian, I would suggest decorum is important. It should stay GSC business.
34. Speaker: Blackboard is also subject to FOIA. We will begin to create something in Blackboard.

e. Legislation

1. Speaker: The other point was that reps. get legislation, and they don't have enough time to look over legislation, and they don't know the context of the legislation.
2. Move to extend time by 5 minutes. Seconded. No opposition.
3. Speaker: If we do first meeting at cabinet, then meetings here are shorter. When we write legislation, we need to make sure we explain what's going on, what's behind it, why it was written, etc. If you are unsure how to do that, please check with Frankc or any member of P&P, and they can help you. Unfortunatley, there is a small window before we send agendas out.
4. Newsome: I think the blackboard idea would be a great forum for making good legislation, ask for sponsors, etc.

X. Public Comment (10 minutes)

- A. None.

XI. Announcements

- A. GSC Meeting: Thursday, Dec. 10, 6:00 pm, Grad Ed Auditorium.
- B. State of Students' Address, Dec. 1, 5:30-6:30 pm, Grad Ed Auditorium. Attendance mandatory.
  - 1. It says attendance mandatory. If you're in seminar, please let us know. There has been talk that Senate and GSC will be formally seated on opposing sides. So we need a good showing. Please let your classes know, let your friends know, etc.
  - 2. The date and time were so late because we wanted a more public venue.
- C. Proxies
  - 1. Two weeks ago, we asked to send Mark the name of 1 proxy. Please do that by Monday.
- D. ASG Holiday Party
  - a. Tuesday 8 December, 7pm, US Pizza
  - b. Holiday Attire
  - c. Forrest: Is the food free? Yes.
  - d. Rainer: But the VP asks that you RSVP to the event. The secretary will forward the email.
- E. Cantu: three-minute thesis competition. Please sign up. The deadline has been extended.
- F. Make sure you are following us on social media
  - a. <https://www.facebook.com/UniversityOfArkansasGraduateStudentCongress/?fref=ts>
  - b. <https://twitter.com/UofAGSC>

**XII. Adjourn at 7:31. Meeting run time: 1:24:11.**