Graduate Student Congress  
Associated Student Government  
University of Arkansas

MINUTES

November 10, 2015  
AU 640  
11:30 AM

I. Call to Order at 11:31 AM

II. Attendance  
A. All Cabinet present. Rainer Gall absent.

III. Approve Minutes, Oct. 6 Executive Cabinet Meeting  
A. No objection.

IV. Approve Agenda  
A. No objection.

V. Special Orders  
A. Adviser Amanda Cantu (3 minutes)  
   1. No report.
   B. ASG Adviser Rainer Gall (3 minutes)  
      1. Rainer is absent. GAs present in his place. No report.

VI. Reports  
A. Speaker Scout Johnson (5 minutes)  
   1. Grad School Committees  
      a. Grad school nominates people to various committees across campus. They would like to shift that responsibility to us, and have those nominations come from the GSC instead of Dean Koski. Thoughts?
      b. Thote: Nominations have to be from GSC? No, they can be any graduate student, but we would determine the nominees.
      c. VS: How many committees? Not as many as ASG, but includes IRB, Hazardous Materials, Conflict of Interest, etc.
   2. ASG Committees
a. Farmer, ASG VP, is in charge of those. There are around 30 committees. We never manage to fill all seats on those committees. Applications are up now.
b. Wrangler: They will close Nov. 18 at noon. Applications and descriptions at asg.uark.edu.
c. Speaker: If you have interest, please apply. Please encourage other grad students to apply.

3. Open Cabinet Position: Off-Campus/Non-Traditional Student Affairs
   a. This is a great position for a grad student. It cannot be one of us unless you want to resign your GSC position. But if you know anyone who is interested in these issues, please pass these along.
4. Elections Commissioner Position open; apply at asg.uark.edu.
5. 2 Vacant Justice positions in December
   a. One position currently open; another will apply in December.
   b. Applications due Nov. 18.
6. NAGPS
   a. National
      1. The meeting went well. We reelected our president, Kristofferson. There was some discussion and concern about concerns at Mizzou. He has yet to make a statement on behalf of the organization, in part because member schools have not given him a mandate to do so.
      2. Move to extend speaker’s time. No objection.
      3. We did split legislative concerns committee into legislative and advocacy committees. The advocacy committee will deal with issues like those at Mizzou. Through that board, we can find out what member institutions think.
   b. Regional
      1. Our regional board meeting was me and three people from Mizzou. I’m the regional chair. I cannot serve in that position after Dec. 31. We are looking for a new regional chair, even if it is an interim.
      2. We do not have a host for our next regional meeting, so it may be us. That is something to look at.
3. Wangler: When would that be decided? We have reached out to the board for bids until Nov. 30.
4. Spencer: Was there not a social justice committee? That has been rolled into advocacy.
5. VS: Does Kristofferson plan to say anything about Mizzou? My understanding is he will not until he gets a clear mandate from membership. I can tell you that the Social Justice Chair will have something to say soon.
6. Trea.: Technically this is not a plank of NAGPS, so that is why he is waiting.
7. VS: They don’t comment on grad student issues?
8. Move to extend speaker’s time. No objection.
9. Speaker: They have commented on things like health insurance concerns. But not on other issues like unionizing or undergraduate football.
10. Speaker: Is everyone familiar with what is happening at Mizzou? If not, please familiarize yourself with that. Be grateful that you are here; our administration is much more open and accessible.
11. Trea: Our new VP is Scout! Congratulations to Scout! This should go under the news section at asg.uark.edu.

B. Vice Speaker Madeleine Forrest (3 minutes)
1. Grad Student Survey
   a. We found out about a month ago that we need IRB approval. In the spring, however, we were told that we did not need IRB approval. That was changed because we might use survey data for legislation.
   b. Mark and I filled out the application. They received it. They say it will take at least a week. We are hoping to get it out before Thanksgiving. After approval, this will go through Qualtrics.
   c. How long should people have? A week? Two weeks.
   d. Wangler: Are you including student IDs? No.
   e. VS: If you have an email address in your dept. please send this survey out to the dept.
   f. Sec.: IRB is backed up. I wouldn’t expect the approval before Thanksgiving.
   g. Move to extend speaker’s time. No objection.
   h. Survey should take 15 minutes.
i. We asked questions about facilities, off campus housing, office space, etc. We hope to use these data in legislation.

j. Speaker: The purpose is to get a feel for what grad students want.

k. VS: These data will be useful for all speakers. There is a whole section on family. Please send this out through your depts.

l. There is a button on the grad website to add self to Koski’s listserv.

2. Committee Meetings
   a. Thank you for keeping me posted. If you don’t have set meeting times, please make sure you’re working with your committee to find the best time. Keep me posted on everything.

3. College Caucuses
   a. I know engineering and Fulbright have met with deans. We are in touch with Bumpers’ Dean. I am in touch with other caucuses.
   b. Can we give caucuses a couple of minutes to present?
   c. Move to extend speaker’s time. No objection.
   d. Arley and Philip will present at general meeting.

C. Treasurer Arley Ward (1 minute)
   1. Finance committee is still working. We have moved past data collection phase, but we are now also considering Ohio State.
   2. We have now begun looking at the application process, and are developing the awards. We hope to award these awards in April.

D. Secretary Mark Nabors (1 minute)
   1. Survey report at next meeting. Larger report after grad student survey data collected.

E. External Relations and Marketing Chair, Jade Newsome (1 minute)
   1. Timeline for approving marketing and news material
      a. Rainer needs our newswire announcement at least a week before. For online stuff, it just has to be approved. He is usually good at responding right away, but we don’t want to wait until the last minute.
      b. As soon as you get anything, send it along to me.
      c. Move to extend speaker’s time. no objection.
      d. By online, you mean flyers, announcements, etc.? Yes.

F. International Concerns Chair, Supriya Thote (1 minute)
   1. Next week is International Education Week. I am thinking of sending out an email to GSC members to ask for volunteers. We need to talk to international students face to face.
   2. Wangler: For a tabling event? No, just to attend the event.
3. Move to extend speaker's time. No objection.
4. Speaker: Can you put together a document on how to be an international razorgrad? What are things you need to know?
5. Treas.: And show how their experiences as international students can enhance all of our experiences?
6. VS: For international students? Yes.

G. Social Chair, Jessica Guinn (1 minute)
1. Nov. events: coffee and donuts at Ozark next Tuesday, 8-10.
2. On Thursday, Nov. 19, Panera lunch 11:30-12:30 at Ozark.
3. I'm also working on a tacky Christmas mixer.
4. Speaker: We need help spreading the word that not all coffee hours are in Ozark.
5. Move to extend speaker's time. No objection.
6. Newsome: I have a couple of flyers to explain.
7. We need to link to facebook and twitter on ASG website.

H. Legislative Affairs Director, Rachel Spencer (1 minute)
1. Returned last week from Little Rock with RAG. Madeleine and Jesse Sims were kind enough to host the attorney general. Can I have five minutes at the Dec. meeting to update the body on RAG as a separate report?
2. I have two folders with photos and notes.
3. Move to extend speaker's time. No objection.
4. Speaker: Can those go on Gizmo? Yes.
5. Spencer: We met with several people in Little Rock. Everyone is excited about our student debt event tomorrow at 6 pm. We have a good distinguished panel, including Arley Ward who is representing GSC. We have been utilizing twitter to promote this and get the conversation going. We are also trying to raise awareness about graduate student debt.
6. I have also been helping out with interviews for director of the office of sustainability. We have 4 finalists.
7. In general, I am thinking about our policy focus for the spring, as well as about our spring trip to Little Rock.
8. I am also interested in hosting a holiday party for all on cabinet at my house. Potentially Dec. 4?

I. Parliamentarian, Frank Berlanga-Medina (1 minute)
1. No report.

J. Graduate Student Life Committee Chair, Rodica Lisnic (1 minute)
1. We met on Oct. 30. We have a secretary. Our members are working hard.
2. Garrett has been working hard. He and I met with Chartwell's about subsidizing graduate meal plans. They will have a brief survey to gauge how many grad students would need that.
K. Facilities Committee Chair, Philip Gilley (1 minute)
   1. Everyone who attended Oct. meeting are working on things. We have another meeting next Wednesday, so I will have a report about that.
   2. We are looking into graduate student discounts for housing.
   3. Outside of this committee, the conflict of interest committee is looking at a new template for conflict of interest.
   4. Move to extend speaker’s time. No objection.

VII. Old Business

VIII. New Business
   A. GSC Resolution 5: A Resolution to Request University Support for And Establishment of the Graduate Enrollment Incentive Program: Representative Garrett Jeter (15 minutes)
      1. Speaker: Garrett is trying to encourage the university to institute a tiered discount program to tuition based on undergrad gpa, awards, publications, etc. The discounts are relatively small.
      2. Speaker: One of my suggestions was to include a request for reinstatement of in-state scholarship tuition waiver (NRTA). Grads used to be eligible for this, but are no longer. He did not add anything to request that be reinstated.
      3. Wangler: Would this apply to any grad student? Just incoming students entering their first year. You can get the discount for a second year if you meet certain criteria.
      4. VS: Where did he get this idea? There are other schools around the country. WE should include that.
      5. Spencer: How does the graduate school feel about that from a budgetary perspective? I’m also curious about departmental feelings about this.
      6. Speaker: I assume that this would be part of the application process.
      7. Wangler: Only academic based? Or needs based? Only academic excellence at undergraduate level.
      8. Speaker: Also does not address incoming PhD students who completed an MA program elsewhere.
      9. VS: Only Garrett working on this? Possibly Nasya as well.
     10. Gilley: Every dept. pays for tuition waivers differently? So how do GAs see this money?
     11. Speaker: the majority of grad students are not on an assistantship, so we have to think about them.
     12. We will now move into a period of debate.
     13. Speaker: There are several things to address. One, Garrett had discussed writing legislation to waive veteran tuition.
We need something for that. I don’t know if it should be in this bill; but that would probably be in a joint resolution. We need information from other schools. We need to include the graduate school on this. We also need input from the Treasurer’s Office. So there are various partners we need to talk to. We also need to address the MA to PhD thing. In my opinion, this should be sent back to committee.

14. Trea.: I agree we need to discuss this with campus partners, particularly those who design applications. That would go through the grad school, so it should be addressed there. I would also like to see a better analysis about the budgetary hit. Most grad students would qualify for this discount.

15. Spencer: In conversations with Dean Needy and campus relations and the AR Dept. of Ed, I’ve learned that all the U of A has to answer to the dept of Ed. and the legislature. This is a budgetary year, so we need to think about cuts that are coming. We need to be aware that the budget is a hot topic, and we are accountable to people outside of the university.

16. Wangler: I would encourage us to just consider students who do not have a GAship. Perhaps that would not hit the grad school’s budget as hard.

17. Gilley: I think this should go toward more to students without an assistantship. The waiver is a part of compensation, so we may be devaluing the work of grad students.

18. Speaker: That could help grad students save money on taxes.


20. Trea.: I respect the detail of his ideas. But possibly talking about those details with campus partners is needed. We need more partners at the beginning.

21. Speaker: A question that came up with Rainer, Amanda, Koski, is what do we hope to gain from this legislation? Is the university going to give the discount? Or are we making a statement?

22. Wangler: Is there another piece other than just a discount?

23. Speaker: Koski asked what our end goal was. We have said that recruiting more grad students is important. Is this just an idea about how to do that? What will we consider a victory?

24. Berlanga: Realistically, it is probably just a statement.

25. Move to extend debate. No objection.

26. Speaker: Koski thought this, plus the veterans waiver bill, should be passed in Dec. so it could be given to Steinmetz on day 1.
27. Gilley: Pulling in other schools. Can we also include those schools’ tuition rates?
28. Speaker: to what end?
29. Gilley: If our rate is already cheaper, then we should consider that.
30. Speaker: that undercuts your argument. And tuition is set by the legislature.
31. Move to refer to Grad Student Life Committee. Seconded. No objection.

32. This Resolution will be referred to the Grad Student Life Committee, with these notes. Lisnic will meet with the authors about next steps.

B. GSC Bill 4: A Bill to Establish the Razorgrad Representative Recruitment (R3) Program: Representative Garrett Jeter (15 minutes)

1. Speaker: At the retreat, we said we wanted to recruit incoming graduate students with experience in ASG. This bill would give incoming students with at least 1 year in GSC a seat, but no voice. After vacancy they can be put into the body by a ⅔ vote.
2. Wangler: Are there a lot of former members in GSC? Some.
3. Quinn: Would this discourage out of state students? We would like to propose an amendment to strike ASG-specific language to include students from other institutions.
4. Berlanga: What about MA to PhD students?
5. Lisnic: Or transfer graduate students?
6. Lisnic: I think Garrett was thinking about this university specifically.
7. Speaker: Yes, that is what he intended. But we don’t believe we should only focus on those who completed undergrad at the U of A.
8. Lisnic: What about just changing to students?
10. Newsome: Is there a parallel to the undergrad Associate member program?
11. Quinn: How will we enforce this? I did a freshmen program. I don’t know how you would verify, and then say what is valid and what is not.
12. Speaker: The wording is that you serve one year in a student government capacity. So anything under student gov’t.
13. Tre.: If you were in student gov’t.
14. Sec.: Question of constitutionality about appointing members during vacancy. That would require a
constitutional change. To change the constitution, that has to go through referendum.

15. Speaker: So we are back to Lisnic’s suggestion to send this back to committee pending changes to make it inclusive to all incoming graduate students who have served, and to clarify any conflicts with code and constitution. And if so, this will have to go to referendum.


17. This Resolution will be referred to the Grad Student Committee to address the above issues.

C. GSC Resolution 6: A Resolution in Support of Tuition and Fee Transparency for Dual-Degree Seeking Graduate and Professional Students: Secretary Mark Nabors and Legislative Affairs Director Rachel Spencer (15 minutes)

1. Resolution in response to the grad students that came to us in our last meeting to ask for support with their tuition and fee questions; JD/MPA, JD/MBA, JD/MA
   a. these students are jointly enrolled, enrolled in total about 127 hours for both degrees
2. They discovered that they were being charged the law rate for all their classes; law school rate of tuition is higher than the masters rate
   a. about at excess of $1500 over the course of the degrees
   b. students REQUIRE classes from both in order to get their degrees
3. Terry Martin was clear that there was not a written policy to support practice, just de facto for a long time
4. Need to add “the Ohio State” for peer institution comparisons
5. At UALR students are charged at the law rate, then UALR compensates the difference; at U Alabama students pay the rate of the majority of the classes they are taking by semester
   a. what happens if it is 3 and 3 classes here - what is the tie breaker?
6. Only the U of Kentucky is like Fayetteville, where the higher rate trumps all the time
7. Potential conflict with ABA requirements for disclosure
8. Dean Leeds is concerned also that because there is no written policy and students were not told, that this issue could threaten accreditation for our law school
   a. Dean Leeds is in support of our stance
9. Emphasis in legislation on current degree seeking students
10. Have hit stone wall with Terry Martin, thus we need to reach out to a wider scope of admins, including Dean Leeds
11. QUESTIONS
12. Jamie - is Rainer aware of the list of admins we plan to reach out to? Just so he is aware of the admins that are being contacted
13. Arley - Completely on board, agree with our right to pursue this, but do we need to see if Senate wants to do this since law students are in Senate? Mark - Senator from the law school is working with us on this bill, so feel like we’re covered there.
15. Speaker: I am going to move to send to second reading with recommendation of pass, pending adding Ohio State and what they do if it’s 50/50 load at Alabama. Seconded. No opposition.

IX. Public Comment (10 minutes)

X. Announcements
   A. GSC Meeting: Wed., Nov. 18, 6:00 pm, Grad Ed Auditorium
   B. State of Students’ Address, Dec. 1, 5:30-6:30 pm in Grad Ed. Auditorium. This is just shy of mandatory.
   C. We have the debt town hall tomorrow night. Those with twitter should be following GSC, leadership, and should be retweeting to legislators.
   D. Proxies: I want everyone to send us one proxy. Please send to Mark. Get names to Mark by the end of the week.
   E. All-Call a couple of weeks ago. Our Rep. of the month was Garrett Jeter. He has been doing a great job with legislation.
   F. Trea.: I noticed the Traveler released an article that said the City of Fayetteville is looking for students to sit on committees. Send to Jade to put on social media. I also wanted to tell people that the technology professional development event was incredible, innovative.
   G. Spencer: Retweet us. #ARstudentdebt. I have some sample tweets.
   H. VS: Encourage people to come to stuff. The only GSC members who came to free lunch were cabinet members. Please encourage committee members to attend. This org. only functions if we attend. Are we going to start thinking about spring GSC meetings? We will be looking at that soon.
   I. Quinn: When will the date of the state of the students address be confirmed? It is.

XI. Adjourn at 12:51 pm. 1:20:41 run time.