



Graduate Student Congress
Associated Student Government
University of Arkansas

MINUTES

March 30, 2016
Graduate Education Building
Auditorium
6:00 PM

- I. Call to Order at 6:07 PM.
- II. Attendance
 - a. 28/35 members present; quorum met.
- III. Approve Agenda
 - a. No objection.
- IV. Special Orders
 - A. Dean of Students Melissa Harwood-Rom and Associate Dean Lori Lander (15 minutes)
 - a. Harwood-Rom: Thank you, Scout, for having us and for your leadership. We would like to talk with you a little bit about our listening tour of student concerns. We are very happy to listen to your concerns via email or otherwise.
 - b. Lander: We actually had an article in *The Traveler* today. The next phase will be to identify three to seven themes that we feel stand out, and then we will have focus groups of administrators to begin to address those concerns. We know that from our perspective, we cannot solve everything; that is not our intention in listening. But this second phase will bring everyone on board to help us work through some of this.
 - c. Harwood-Rom: With relatively new leadership on the campus, we do have ways to get information from students into the minds and onto the agendas of university leadership. We are not here to fix everything; you know how things work. We must start in a more rudimentary way--to work together as a community to address issues that students and graduate students have. Graduate students are in a position of strength because the campus knows that we need more

- graduate students. The best way to improve the graduate student experience is to listen.
- d. Jeter: How does one become part of the focus group?
 - i. Lander: email me at llander@uark.edu.
 - e. Lisnic: What sort of issues are you looking to address?
 - i. Hardwood-Rom: Some things are experiential things like how are you treated on campus? Just whatever you feel on our campus that is positive or needs work. We have spoken with students about how they're treated in the classroom, out of the classroom, and in the community.
 - ii. Lander: An example is a group of veterans who are lumped together with ROTC. But their experience is very different. So we are using that story to address the issue. Another example from undergraduate students is the divide between Greek and non-Greek, and how that impacts opportunities in ASG and how they are respected.
 - iii. Harwood-Rom: Another comment from non-traditional students is sometimes these students feel invisible. It's not that people are necessarily getting negative attention, but they don't feel seen. You as graduates may have a different relationship with faculty than undergrads, but there are some things about that relationship that need to be addressed. We have had a variety of comments, but we have learned a lot.
 - f. Lander: What has been your experience as a graduate student on this campus?
 - i. Powers: One issue that graduate students face is a high variance of office space for graduate students. Have you toured office spaces? Often they are very small or so out-of-the-way and even perhaps unsafe that graduate students are forced to hold office hours at Arsaga's.
 - 1. Hardwood-Rom: That is one issue that really has the attention of Chancellor Steinmetz. We are aware of that. The other group is clinical instructors. We have people teaching who do not have an office.
 - ii. Nabors: I know some students are forced to work several jobs because the stipends are not adequate.
 - 1. Harwood-Rom: We are aware of that, and the new chancellor has this on his radar. But this is an issue that takes a lot of time to solve.

- iii. Lisnic: A study we conducted said that graduate students are more likely than undergrads to be food insecure.
 - 1. Lander: That falls under our food pantry. So Angela may be interested in talking about that with you. I would love to open up more dialogue about that.
 - 2. Lisnic: Garrett and I were trying to communicate with Chartwell's, but I am wondering what the university can do to communicate with Chartwell's?
 - 3. Harwood-Rom: Chartwell's is under the division of student affairs, so we are in a position to have those conversations. Let's follow up on that with you.
 - iv. Kimbrough: I'm a student parent, and a single parent. About a quarter of students enrolled in higher education are student parents, and single parents are 88% more likely to be a low-income student and over 50% more likely to not complete their degree. There are a lot of poverty issues. I think that needs to be a part of all of these conversations. And childcare is fundamental to student parent success--and that is a long road.
 - v. Gilley: The other concern is graduate housing. And that goes in with office space, stipends, and family needs. Is that on the radar?
 - 1. Harwood-Rom: It really isn't, in part because there has been such a boom in student housing.
 - 2. Lander: We need to tackle the issue itself, i.e., working with community partners to make housing more accessible. We need the right people at the table.
 - vi. Martinez proxy: My department says we only work 20 hours per week, but we stay from 8-5. That's a problem.
 - 1. Lander: Yes, we need to address that. As we move forward, some faculty will be needed because that's out of the wheel-house of student affairs.
 - 2. Speaker: That issue came up on the survey. Some folks said they were working as many as 65 hours per week for a 20 hour assistantship.
- B. ASG Adviser Rainer Gall (3 minutes)

- a. Lander and Harwood-Rom are very responsive and supportive. Please feel free to reach out to them with concerns.
- b. The general election for the executive officers resulted in a runoff. We are in the middle of that now. The ballot is open until 4 pm tomorrow. Along with that, all three referenda issues passed.
- c. In a couple of weeks, the OSA will be hosting finalists for my position on April 12-15. Madeleine has more information about that. Each candidate will have an open presentation about increasing diversity at 11 am on each day. We would love to have some graduate students in there.
- d. This is our second to last meeting. Please submit last minute legislation. We are having some events before the end of the semester.
 - i. The Red Talk tomorrow night deals with student research, which will feature three-minute thesis competition finalists (including our own Jade Newsome, who won!).
 - ii. Earth Week is the week of April 18. That is also the last Red Talk of the semester, focused on sustainability issues.
- e. Please clean up the room. GSC has been great at this, but not ASG as a whole.

C. Representative Michael Powers (5 minutes)

- a. What are the proper strategies and protocols for emergency situations? Graduate students face this question as they are in the classroom. We get students in stressful situations, and unfortunately, there are emergencies like active shooter scenarios. So it is good to take account of those protocols and strategies, as well as resources.
- b. We are putting on an event next Thursday in the Grad Auditorium, from 5:30 to 6:30, with food. The director of UAPD and another officer will be here to discuss those scenarios, and how to assess a potential threat. The event will be very practical with possible scenarios. Arkansas has a great interdisciplinary team that monitors threats, including a psychiatrist. Visit bit-tat.uark.edu for more information. They try to stress that they are preemptive and proactive.
- c. Our event is comprehensive and will include things like medical emergencies, inclement weather scenarios, and Avoid-Deny-Defend strategies. At the end of the event, for those who would like to stay, we will have a simulation; there will be a trigger warning. We are putting the finishing

touches on a great flyer, so share it and get a good crowd here.

V. Reports

A. Speaker Scout Johnson (5 minutes)

- a. Runoff elections for executives are taking place. These are folks we will be working closely with, so please vote. I have some numbers from the general election; 5587 students voted, which is a record, but only 121 were graduate students (about 2.1%). Only 2.6% of graduate students voted. I will welcome any suggestions about improving those numbers going forward, because they are not acceptable to me.
- b. We will have Pizza Wars, which is a fundraiser for UACares, only April 27, noon-2 on the Union Mall. You sample multiple pizza places, and vote for the best. All funds goes to the UA Cares Scholarship fund.
- c. We did ask for a ASGJ judicial interpretation regarding the president's right to veto legislation (which is not stated). ASGJ ruled in favor of the president. Any questions can be forwarded to me or Chief Justice Jenna Poe at asgjcj@uark.edu.

B. Vice Speaker Madeleine Forrest (3 minutes)

- a. As Rainer mentioned, the interview is going on for his position. I am the GSC representative on there, along with Tanner. It has been going quite well. There were a lot of applications, with telephone interviews. We will email out the times for the presentations. Please be there for their presentations. We need to know about their advising philosophy when it comes to graduate students. We will send those times out, 11-12 on Tuesday through Friday.
- b. We are putting together an etiquette event for the end of the month. We have a different person this time. Arley has seen this person before. We envision a presentation of 45 minutes to an hour, and then she will help us mingle and network. The set up is a cocktail hour following paper presentations at the conference.
- c. Tentatively, Tuesday April 26. There will be hors d'oeuvres. Chips are on the way.

C. Treasurer Arley Ward (1 minute)

- a. Last month we passed the bill for GSC awards. There are several awards. That application period closes on April 1. Please nominate people for that.
 - i. I have three members who are willing to be on the selection committee. If you are interested in helping, let me know today.

- b. If you have selected to go to the NAGPS regional conference, and I have emailed you about paperwork, please get that to me by Friday.
- c. I would like to echo what Rainer said. Please go to the Red Talks tomorrow to support Jade and research at the university. And if you have students, please encourage them to go.
- D. Secretary Mark Nabors (1 minute)
 - a. No report.
- E. External Relations and Marketing Chair, Jade Newsome (1 minute)
 - a. No report.
- F. International Concerns Chair, Supriya Thote (1 minute)
 - a. Absent.
- G. Social Chair, Jessica Guinn (1 minute)
 - a. Be on the lookout for April events.
- H. Legislative Affairs Director, Rachel Spencer (1 minute)
 - a. Absent.
- I. Parliamentarian, Frankc Berlanga-Medina (1 minute)
 - a. No report.
- J. Graduate Student Life Committee Chair, Rodica Lisnic (1 minute)
 - a. No report.
- K. Facilities Committee Chair, Philip Gilley (1 minute)
 - a. No report.

VI. Old Business

- A. GSC Bill 5: A Bill to Establish a System of Accountability through Censures: Representative Joshua Burbridge (15 minutes)
 - a. Cabinet Recommendation: Pass as amended.
 - b. Speaker: We had a hiccup in cabinets. Any amendments will have to come to the floor. I yield the chair to Parliamentarian Frankc Berlanga Medina.
 - c. Burbridge: As you can see, this has changed quite a bit. The censure bit is gone; office hours are optional; committee absences are combined with other absences.
 - d. Wesolowski: Was the amended bill sent out?
 - i. Speaker: The amended one was sent out. This is the original bill.
 - ii. Wesolowski: Can the body review this without cutting into his time, for 5 minutes? Second.
 - e. Nabors: Move to end period of reading. Seconded. No opposition.
 - f. Berlanga: We are now in a period of questions:
 - g. Newsome: On A it says 3 unexcused absences, and on the bottom it says 2.
 - i. Burbridge: Yes, that will have to be amended.

- i. Speaker: As it currently stands, you are allowed 2 unexcused, and removed after 3rd.
- ii. Wesolowski: So this removes the power from the speaker and gives it to the body? Yes.
- iii. And can you explain the change from unexcused congress meetings to both congress and committee meetings.
 - 1. We have simply combined things for 3 total absences.
- iv. And can you explain why there are no censures?
 - 1. There was a feeling in this body...
 - 2. Move to extend by 1 minute. Seconded. No opposition.
 - 3. There was discomfort with the idea of removing someone. We can consider motions of censure about anything, but not something to remove.
- n. Move to extend by 1 minute. Seconded. Objection. Failed.
- o. Berlanga: We will now move into a period of debate:
- p. Speaker: I know the committee put in a lot of hard effort; there was a lot of thought behind this bill, which I do not want to dismiss. While it is never my intention to make this body smaller, I do believe we need standards. We accepted these positions as positions of service, and I believe there should be minimal expectations, so I will propose to amend the bill as follows. So I move to amend the Bill:
 - i. We changed the title; we added some authors and sponsors.
 - ii. Absences: Instead of going back to last year to encourage office hours, we have said members must hold a service hour each week, which can be satisfied in various ways. To qualify for awards, members may miss no more than three service hours/semester. We have said there are a maximum of 3, followed by automatic removal. If it isn't automatic, there is the potential for abuse. If it is automatic, it happens. There is a provision to appeal to the executive committee, however.
 - iii. Committee: We said committees should continue to meet once per month. Some committees don't seem to have a lot of work.
- q. Move to extend speaker's time by 3 minutes. Seconded. Opposed. Motion carries with a simple majority.
 - i. Point of order: since we are in debate, don't we have to suspend the rules to extend time.

- r. Move to suspend the rules to extend the speaker's time by 3 minutes. Seconded. No opposition.
- s. So we don't want to reward some committees with less work; we want them to still meet.
- t. Speaker: Move to amend. Nabors: Second the amendment.
- u. Treat: Point of information: Does the speaker yield to questions?
- v. Speaker: I yield to questions.
- w. Wesolowski: I would like to know how the cabinet has reached the conclusion that it is most impartial than the entire body as a whole when considering appeals for absences?
 - i. Speaker: I would say just as we would hope that the body as a whole would not take that into consideration, we would hope that the executive committee would not take that into consideration.
 - ii. Move to extend by 2 minutes. seconded. no opposition.
 - iii. Wesolowski: So in that case, why don't we stick with the standard parliamentary procedure?
 - iv. Speaker: In my opinion, and that of the Cabinet, it is less impartial to say it is automatic, black and white. If you would like to amend the amendment to put the appeal to the entire body.
 - v. Trea: When people have contacted the executive committee about absences, they have had some intimate details.
 - vi. Treat: Under the current system, right now you have the discretion to grant an excused absence without anything becoming public? Yes.
- x. Treat: I am against the amendment. I think we have a philosophically question. Everyone knows I respect Scout and the Cabinet. This is about choice in the body. Some people feel that they are only a rubber stamp for cabinet, but I know the cabinet works its tails off. So we have some issues to work through. The original bill is all about recognizing that there are gray areas. If we can't handle our own attendance policy, we have to question whether we are serving any purpose at all. This is parliamentary norm--500 years of parliamentary law to protect the body.
- y. Trea: Gray areas have already been acknowledged. We have a very generous policy. Some of the intent was to acknowledge that we are elected to serve and must be here.
- z. Time has expired. Move to extend by 1 minute. Second. No opposition.

- i. Treat: Point of order: What question?
 - ii. Berlanga: Right now we are debating the proposed amendment. If we would like to extend debate we can.
 - aa. Sec: We have exceptions to parliamentary procedure throughout our standing rules. We must decide if this serves our body the best.
 - bb. Treat: Call the question.
 - cc. Amendment passes: 59% majority.
 - dd. Berlanga: We will now move into debate.
 - ee. Treat: I move to lay the bill on the table. Seconded. Opposed. Motion fails.
 - ff. Berlanga: We now move into a period of debate. Debate in opposition.
 - gg. Feraro: While I agree we need some form of order, I feel like we are shooting ourselves in the foot. I understand we are grad students and need to take responsibility, but I don't agree with this.
 - hh. Treat: Call the question:
 - ii. We will now move to a period of voting.
- jj. The Bill passes: 62%-31%-8%.**

- B. GSC Bill 9: A Bill to Establish the Graduate Student Congress Conference Registration Awards: Treasurer Arley Ward (15 minutes)
- a. Cabinet Recommendation: Pass as amended.
 - b. Treas: We are all aware that travel funding has been scarce this year. We keep hearing that we need to establish a process for offering financial awards. It is important to note that this represents a skeleton--an idea to work toward. This is us saying how we would award financial grants to pay for conference registrations for graduate students that are awarded something.
 - c. Speaker: We will move into a period of debate.
 - d. VS: Move to amend line 4.
 - i. Speaker: those are typos.
 - e. McMillian: What if we don't know whether the department has approved funds when you apply?
 - i. That is one of the many questions we agonized over. We had to have a hard deadline for funding. Hopefully we can work with the department. You can still apply, but you probably would not get funding.
 - f. Wesolowski: I did not see a source of funding?
 - i. There isn't. This is a skeleton by which we will argue to receive funding. Those sources have been tasked for the next finance committee.

- ii. But it won't come out of our budget? Right.
- g. Kimbrough: If you are partially funded are you eligible?
 - i. Yes. If you have exhausted all sources of funding, but you may be tiered lower.
- h. Wesolowski: What if they have not been accepted yet?
 - i. Because of the limited nature of funds, we do not feel like we could responsibly hold funding for someone who may be accepted at the exclusion of someone who has definitely been accepted.
- i. Any further debate?
- j. Burbridge: Move to previous question.
- k. We will now move into a period of voting.
- l. The Bill passes: 96%-0%-4%**

C. GSC Bill 10: A Bill to Amend the GSC Standing Rules to Encourage Volunteerism: Secretary Mark Nabors (15 minutes)

- a. Cabinet Recommendation: Pass.
- b. Author: an encour
- c. questions:
- d. What sort of activites apply as volunteer: any gsc event
- e. WHat benifet to the gsc does this have: allows us to track hours and give members the ability to apply for awards
- f. WHat would be the minimum hours: 1 hour a week. this is not forced
- g. would this allow the sec track hours with out using this tool
- h. Wesolowski: My concern is that this is a way to make participation more punitive.
 - i. Speaker: As a point of information: The punitive measures would require us to track regardless. This makes it easier to do so.
 - ii. Wesolowski: It's kind of like Big Brother.
 - iii. VS: You don't have to use it.
- i. Burbridge: I just wanted to clarify that there are no new punitive measures in the bill we just passed--the absence policy was always there, service hours are easier, etc.
- j. Wesolowski: Perhaps I misspoke--I meant the focus on punitive measures.
- k. TreA: I really like this idea. I think anytime we can make ourselves more visible on campus, it makes our argument for more resources stronger.
- l. Lisnic: I wanted to repeat again that this is not something that we have to do--it is something that we choose to do. It is just optional, and I think the rewards are great incentives.
- m. Burbridge: Move to previous question. Second. No opposition.

n. The Bill passes: 77%-15%-8%.

- D. ARBITRATION: ASG Senate Resolution 3: the Grade Forgiveness Policy Act of 2015: Speaker Scout Johnson (10 minutes)
- a. Cabinet Recommendation: Nullify.
 - b. Speaker: As many of you know, we asked for arbitration for ASG Senate Resolution 3. While we don't necessarily disagree with this bill, it refers to all students. Using all students infringes on our right to represent graduate students. If the bill is nullified, the Senate will repass the resolution after clarifying that it is referring to undergraduate students.
 - c. Treat: Call the question. Seconded. No opposition.
 - d. The Resolution is nullified: 81% vote to nullify.**
- E. ASG Joint Bill 6: The Legislative Diversity Act of 2016: Senators Mitchell Edwards and Cole Anthony (15 minutes)
- a. Cabinet Recommendation: Pass.
 - b. ASG Joint Bill 6: This is a change to Senate code only. But we also have to improve it. The intention is to improve the diversity of the ASG Senate, which is 100% white and 96% Greek. It will forbid the formation of tickets for Senate seats. No one expects this is a magic bullet, but only a small step.
 - c. Wesolowski: What did this pass by?
 - i. One of the coauthors is the president of Greek orgs.
 - d. Treat: Does this have to be reviewed by any sort of university council? I question if this would stand a legal challenge given its limitations on freedom of speech.
 - i. I don't think that has been considered.
 - ii. Treat: The formation of a ticket touches on freedom of association. I'm a civil rights historian.
 - e. Martinez proxy: How does this increase diversity?
 - i. Good question.
 - f. Sec: I want to debate against. The Resolution is unclear what it is amending in the Code, and there is a question of whether this would affect us.
 - g. Burbridge: While I think Mark's concerns are important and that we should have amendments, I believe this is a good step forward.
 - h. Treat: First, I would like to second what Mark said. This is not looking at ways to encourage diversity.
 - i. Berlanga: I would like my name to be struck as a sponsor. The version they sent me was not this version, and I have been in Mexico on a research trip. And as a Latino Greek, I have seen years and years of ASG become more Greek and

- White. I don't think this would fundamentally change anything.
- j. No opposition to striking Berlanga Medina from sponsorship.
 - k. Burbridge: Move to amend. Seconded. Amendment passes unanimously.
 - l. Speaker: We will now move to a period of debate.
 - m. Burbridge: So now that we have addressed the concerns Mark brought up, I would encourage everyone to pass.
 - n. Treat: I think this addresses the technical challenges, I don't think it addresses the substantive issues.
 - o. Treanor: I don't want to vote against somebody who is trying to do something, even though it may be imperfect.
 - p. Wesolowski: Like Mark said, this is a bandaid on a larger problem. Should it be addressed legislatively, or from the ground up?
 - q. Treat: Curtailing the freedoms of speech and assembly of some people in hopes of promoting diversity seems to be a stretch.
 - r. Gilley: This only applies to the Senate. Let them run their affairs.
 - s. Berlanga Medina: If this is something that truly curtails the civil rights of someone, then it does impact us.
 - t. Bohlen: Because some people are impacted, we need to pay particular attention.
 - u. I think we have the responsibility to reject this bill to force the senate to address diversity.
 - v. Speaker: This is not going to fix anything or everything--and the senate discussed that. But to reject something because it is not perfect is asking entirely too much. Do any of us have the perfect answer? Because if we do, we can amend. I do not want to be the body that stands between Senate and their attempt to fix an important problem.
 - w. I would just like to add that I think it's our responsibility to uphold a federal constitution, as well as the ASG constitution. This may cause complications, so we should not pass anything that may potentially cause legal problems.
 - x. Speaker: I would say you cannot prove a negative. We cannot prove that will not happen, but I take your points as valid concerns.
 - y. Treat: I agree, Scout, but what we can prove that we are dedicated to those principles, and that we are concerned with the general chilling of free speech on campuses.

- z. Burbridge: I really disagree. I don't think this is a free speech or assembly issue. There are certain restrictions on spending money, for example.
- aa. Berlanga Medina: I think this problem is representative of the university as a whole. We have a diversity mission statement, but diversity really isn't there. Whatever course of action we come up with, I will support. But I would also support further investigation of this question.

bb. Bill passes: 40%-36%-24%.

F. ASG Joint Resolution 3: A Resolution to Recognize Student Parents and Raise Awareness for Their Concerns: Representatives Stacy Kimbrough and Kara Kaiser (15 minutes)

- a. Cabinet Recommendation: Pass.
- b. Kimbrough: I authored this as a joint resolution because student parent concerns face undergraduate and graduate students, although graduate students have specific concerns. Its an awareness piece. There are footnotes with sources.
- c. No questions.
- d. Berlanga Medina: As a child of a single parent who didn't get to go to college, I strongly support this. We should be supporting our parents, especially single parents.
- e. Sec: Call the question.
- f. **Joint Resolution passes: Approved by acclamation.**

G. GSC Bill 11: A Bill to Authorize Funding to Host the NAGPS Leadership Summit August 2016: Treasurer Arley Ward (15 minutes)

- a. Cabinet Recommendation: Pass.
- b. Trea: This is a great way to bring more attention to our needs and our organization. It reminds our administration how important we are in the state of Arkansas and nationally. This allocates \$1000 from this year's budget for August.
- c. Guinn: Is there any way to bump up the amount? No.
- d. Wesolowski: Is this the same as the national meeting? No. But this would be a trial run for that. But it is advertised nationally, as opposed to only regionally, along with the entire board of directors. And this is an opportunity for our representatives to attend leadership workshops.
- e. **The Bill passes 96%-0%-4%.**

VII. New Business

A. Discussion: ASGJ's interpretation of presidential veto power over GSC legislation: Speaker Scout Johnson (10 minutes)

- a. Already discussed. Judicial ruled that GSC should be treated as an equal body. So we will see what sort of precedent that sets going forward.
 - b. Treat: What movement is there to separate? We have a different agenda, I have never known a university that has this system, we have a chancellor that is very supportive, and the administrator who was opposed to that has left.
 - i. Speaker: I don't know if this is that time or not. I know there is some movement from people outside the body. I have not heard from anyone inside the body, though I am sure there are those who think that.
 - ii. Trea: I know there is talk of this. One reason why I don't personally think that should happen, is if that happens today our budget tomorrow is \$0.
 - iii. Treat: But what happens is what the chancellor happens?
 - iv. Trea: I think there is a lot of water to tread before that happens.
 - c. VS: So right now we have a wait and see policy?
 - i. Speaker: The other option is to try to push the question.
 - d. Wesolowski: Has the president vetoed our legislation? Yes, last year. And there were no questions asked last year? No one noticed.
 - e. Wesolowski: What was the purpose of bringing this to J?
 - i. Speaker: This stems from the presidential empowerment act of 2015, so they would have a pocket pass. The senate voted that down, and in doing so, did not include the GSC under the president's veto power.
- B. ASG Joint Bill 7: The Election Reform Act of 2016: Speaker Scout Johnson (15 minutes)
- a. **Refer to policies and procedures committee.**

VIII. Public Comment (10 minutes)

IX. Announcements

- A. GSC Meeting: Thursday, April 21, 6:00 PM, Grad Ed Auditorium.
 - a. Inauguration of new members, with elections for leadership positions.
- B. Health Week Continues
- C. Sustainability Week in April
- D. Next REDTalk
- E. ASG Advisor Presentations, Tuesday-Friday, 12-15 April, 11am
- F. March Member of the Month

- a. Congratulations to Stacy Kimbrough!
- G. Outstanding Representative of the Year
 - a. Congratulations to Garrett Jeter!
- H. Representative of the Year
 - a. Congratulations to Stacy Kimbrough!
- I. NAGPS Regional Conference.

X. Adjourn at 8:49 PM