

Minutes of the Graduate Student Association Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, November 6, 2024

Attendance:

Officers & Staff:

President:	I. Kolding	Programming:	J. Garcia Ramirez
Vice President:	S. MacDougall	Dir. of Operations:	S. George/ D. Staly
Treasurer:	T. Grosso	Editorial Assistance:	
		MDRF:	

Board Members:

Departmental:

Africana & Americana:	absent	History:	K. Kostin
Anthropology:	L. Quarles	ISE:	inactive
Architecture:	S. Zarub (absent- 1/2)	Information Science:	absent
Art:	K.Leon Andino	LAI:	D. James
Audiology:	M. Tumminaro	Linguistics:	absent
Biochemistry:	M. Goldberg	Materials Design & In:	G.S. Oteme
Biological Sciences:	B. Liu	Mathematics:	absent
Biomedical Engineering:	S.A. Periyasamy	MAE:	A. Nayyar/ Z. Diermyer
Biostatistics:	S. Chen	Media Study:	C. Hansen
Cancer Sciences- RPCCC:	A. Das/ R.C.G. Rodrigues	Microbiology:	M. Mazzaferro
Chem. & Bio. Eng:	absent	Music:	M. Sirvent
Chemistry:	D. Edirisinghe/ B. Kumara	Neuroscience:	A. Tranquille
CSEE:	M.H. Lasheen/ F.M. Daud	Nursing:	absent
Classics:	absent	Occupational Therapy:	B. Osborne/ R. Guy
Communication:	absent	Oral Biology:	D. Leyva
Comm. Health & H.B.	J. Gaston	Pharmaceutics:	R.R. Karthikeyan
Comparative Lit:	absent	Pharm. & Tox:	S. Narwekar
CSE:	M. Lary	Philosophy:	inactive
CSEP:	R. Lelito	Physical Therapy:	J. Manning/ N. Satter
ELP:	absent	Physics:	P. Young
Electrical Engineering:	B.M. Antoine/ S. Basu	Political Science:	S. Krzemian
English:	absent	Psychology:	S. Levy
Environment & Sus:	absent	RLL:	J. Garcia Ramirez
EEH:	A. Hamblet	Social Work:	A. Blackburn
ENS:	A. Gabel	Sociology:	G. Ceja Morales
Geography:	S. Wang	Speech:	J. Flint/ H. Miller
Geology:	K. Eaman	Theatre & Dance:	I. Downes
Global Gender Studies:	J. Allen	Urban Planning:	absent

International Clubs:

Bangladeshi:	M.A. Islam	Latin American:	A.A. Chacon
Indian:	V. Maheshkar	Taiwanese:	inactive
Iranian:	absent		

Special Interest Clubs:

Cognitive Science:	S.A. Mirkoohi	GIGS:	inactive
GradSWE:	inactive	GSPHA:	inactive
Graduate Poetics:	absent	UB Sci & Health Policy:	inactive
Grad Students of Color:	F. Arcy	UBQ:	C. Doubek

Guests:

J. Lippes	Legal
D. Kalita	Chemistry/Election Committee Chair

1. President Isaac Kolding calls the meeting to order at 6:32pm

2. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes from the October 2<sup>nd</sup> Board of Directors Meeting
  - Motion: Political Science
  - Second: Electrical Engineering
  - In Favor: 45; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 0
  - Motion passes

3. Announcements

- GSA will be closed for Fall Recess
  - Wednesday, November 27<sup>th</sup> to Friday, November 29<sup>th</sup>
  - South Campus satellite office closed Tuesday, November 26<sup>th</sup>
- GSA will be closed for Winter Break
  - Open through Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>
  - Closed Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> – Thursday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Open on Summer Hours Thursday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> – Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>
  - Monday – Thursday 8:30am – 4:00pm, Closed on Fridays
  - Closed Monday, January 13<sup>th</sup> for MLK Jr. Day observance (University Closed)
  - Regular Business Hours resume Wednesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - Paperwork deadline will be Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> for payments to be processed before Winter Break!
- Programming
  - GSA Programming Coordinator Jamison Garcia Ramirez reviews the upcoming events:
  - More Discount AMC Movie Tickets Now On Sale
    - \$5 each. 1 per UB ID. Reserve online and pick up at the UB Ticket Office in 221 Student Union.
  - November 8<sup>th</sup> - South Campus Java Junction, 11:00am to 1:00pm in 105 Harriman Hall
    - Free Tim Horton's coffee and donuts for graduate students
  - November 14<sup>th</sup> - Distinguished Speaker Series presents Nadia Murad, 7:00pm at CFA
    - Free tickets available now for graduate students. 1 per UB ID. Reserve online and digital tickets will be sent out the day before the event.
  - December 29<sup>th</sup> - Buffalo Bills Football Game vs. New York Jets
    - Ticket on sale November 25<sup>th</sup> for \$50 each. 1 per UB ID.
    - Limited quantity available. First come, first served.

4. Report of the President

- GSA President Isaac Kolding discusses updates from the Policy Working Group (Mutual Aid Policy)
  - This is the policy for when UPD can request back-up from other emergency services. After discussion in the group, it has become clear that any University policy imposed will be superseded by federal policy that already exists. This means a mutual aid policy will have no effect. This policy was in response to the protests from last May, where back-up was called in. The committee is recommending a related policy (not a mutual aid policy) that would require more robust communication between UPD and the rest of the university community after any event that requires mutual aid. Something like an "after action report" for communicating and facilitating transparency. Nothing is in place yet, but discussions are ongoing and updates will be provided.
- Updates on Policy Review Group (Speech and Assembly Policies)
  - These are the policies related to assembling, posting and camping policies that have been recently revamped. As previously discussed, UB's policies were unusually liberal and some of the policies on posting and assembling were removed in the last revisions. The committee received some concerned push back on those changes from a faculty group that was concerned these new policies would make it easier for the spread of hate speech on campus. The committee responded that a healthy, inclusive campus environment is obviously important and desired by everyone, but that the speech and assembling policies are probably not the place where that culture needs to be changed. No future changes are anticipated to happen to these policies, but updates will be provided if there are any to report.
- Updates from Broad-Based Fee Consultation Process
  - Isaac met with the Broad-Based Fee stewards on Monday, who are representatives from the University who explain what fees are spent on. The meeting's intention is to get feedback from students about how they think fees can be better spent. In that meeting Isaac argued for additional transparency, specifically when the University uses fees to build buildings. It would be helpful if they could clearly show whether fees are used for building projects, for salaries, or for other purposes. The documentation available online, while quite thorough, is unclear, and includes some intimations that fees are being used to pay for professors' salaries, when in fact they are not. Other members of that meeting asked for additional safety features, especially in parking lots on South Campus such as extra lights, to make students feel safer when walking to their cars. At the moment, no fee increases are being proposed, but updates will

be provided if a fee increase is presented. There was a roadmap for fee increases mentioned at last year's meetings. Questions or feedback about fees can be sent to [gsa-president@buffalo.edu](mailto:gsa-president@buffalo.edu).

- Results from COAL grants
  - Two clubs, Graduate Indian Student Association (GISA) and Cognitive Science GSA, applied for and were both partially approved for COAL programming grants this year for a total of \$7,960. Thank you and congratulations to both of those groups.
- GSA Conference Funding Survey and Focus Group
  - The GSA Services Committee is working to develop a report on GSA's conference funding. As part of that, we want students' feedback on how they feel about GSA's conference funding. We have launched a survey for students to participate in, which will be open through this Friday (<https://forms.gle/A7goFXz1yPcRtUab6>), or you can participate in a focus group meeting to be held later in November. If interested in that, please fill out the form at <https://forms.gle/Nfma45HCeHWfTsBW8>. Please share these links with your constituents. We are particularly interested in hearing from Master's students, since 80% of the respondents so far have been PhD students. We would like to get more balanced responses.

#### 5. Report of the Vice President

- GSA Vice President Sarah MacDougall reminds clubs that they should be sharing information about club meeting times with all graduate student members, and not just sharing the meeting minutes. Club officers alone cannot make decisions on behalf of the club
- Reminder about club voting and funding guidelines
  - All votes must take place in open club meetings
  - Club members have to approve of all expenses and amounts (E-board alone cannot approve expenses)
  - Meeting attendance must meet quorum in order for votes to be legitimate!
  - Minutes must show the motion, the second, and the voting tallies.
- The GSA E-board met with the Graduate School recently and they informed us that they are planning to open a Data Lab in January at South Campus that will be managed by the Biostatistics Department. It will be a collaboration between the Graduate School and the UB Libraries. However, the lab will only be available to PhD students and not to Master's students. They plan to send out an announcement to all Program Directors, so if you are a Master's student who needs help with statistics, please tell your Department leaders so that they can inform the Graduate School that Master's students do statistics too and should be allowed to use this new service.
- The UB Guardian App is an undermarketed tool that could be very useful for students. It offers safety timers and direct calls to UPD. If you are unfamiliar with the app, please check it out, as it could be very beneficial for anyone with safety concerns on campus.

#### 6. Report of the Treasurer

- GSA Treasurer Tamara Grosso discusses funding account balances
  - We have one funding request this month, so balances are as follows:
    - Special Activity: (updated balance) \$10,000.00 to start; \$1,200.00 recommended this month; \$7,650.00 remaining
    - Interdepartmental Activity: (updated balance) \$3,000.00 to start; \$0.00 recommended; \$3,000.00 remaining
    - Symposium: (updated balance) \$10,000.00 to start; \$1,400.00 recommended; \$8,600.00 remaining
    - Scholarly publication: (updated balance) \$6,000.00 to start; \$0.00 recommended; \$6,000.00 remaining
    - Community outreach: (updated balance) \$3,000.00 to start; \$0.00 recommended; \$3,000.00 remaining
- Scholarly Publication Highlight and Reminder
  - This fund exists to support original and scholarly academic publications such as journals (of varying media) or the formal proceedings of graduate student conferences.
  - Please note that the November 20<sup>th</sup> funding application deadline is the final deadline of the year to apply for GSA Scholarly Publication funding!
    - All publications must be printed by June 30, 2025
- Conference Funding
  - 27 requests in November for \$10,705.57; 25 applications approved for \$10,305.57 (2 late applications)
  - Updated beginning balance: \$225,000.00; Remaining balance: \$170,500.44
  - Question is asked as to whether this is the amount that has actually been spent.
    - Tamara responds that we do keep track of that data, but that it is constantly changing and takes time to calculate as it changes each time a reimbursement is processed. We only report the amount that has been awarded to date to the Board of Directors.

#### 7. Old Business

- No Old Business

#### 8. New Business

- Club Recognition
  - No clubs are up for recognition this month

- Funding Requests
  - Tamara reports that the Finance Committee has reviewed the one Symposium and one Special Activity application and that both are recommended for full funding
  - Representatives from Media Study GSA and Graduate Indian Student Association (GISA) give a brief description of their events
  - Motion to approve both funding requests as a block at the recommended amounts
    - Motion: Art
    - Second: Biochemistry
    - In Favor: 45; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 3
    - Motion passes
- Approval of Election Code
  - Election Committee Chair Devaleena Kalita reports that all of the dates and deadlines have been updated to reflect the new year's calendar, and that the only other change proposed was to return to the requirement that candidates must have attended at least two Board of Directors meetings within the past twelve months in order to become a candidate. This will ensure that all candidates are familiar with GSA and Board of Directors proceedings.
  - Motion to approve the Election Code
    - Motion: Computer Science Engineering
    - Second: Social Work
    - In Favor: 45; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 1
    - Motion passes

#### 9. Roll Call and Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn at 7:05pm
  - Motion: Media Study
  - Second: Chemistry
  - In favor: 45; Oppose: 1; Abstain: 0
  - Motion passes