

Minutes of the Graduate Student Association Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, October 2, 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:	D. Duske	History:	K. Kostin
Anthropology:	L. Quarles	ISE:	inactive
Architecture:	S. Zarub/ J. Ferreiras	Information Science:	M.E. Tiburccio
Art:	K. Leon Andino	LAI:	D. James
Audiology:	M. Tumminaro	Linguistics:	J. Pokorski
Biochemistry:	M. Goldberg	Materials Design & In:	C.T. Chen
Biological Sciences:	B. Liu	Mathematics:	absent
Biomedical Engineering:	R. Bing	MAE:	A. Nayyar/ Z. Diermyer
Biostatistics:	Y.L. Liu	Media Study:	C. Hansen
Cancer Sciences- RPCCC:	absent	Microbiology:	J. Furfaro
Chem. & Bio. Eng:	M. Zamani	Music:	M. Sirvent
Chemistry:	D. Edirisinghe/ B. Kumara	Neuroscience:	absent
CSEE:	M.H. Lasheen/ F.M. Daud	Nursing:	absent
Classics:	M. Barcarolo	Occupational Therapy:	B. Osborne/ R. Guy
Communication:	I. Andreeva	Oral Biology:	S. Biswas
Comm. Health & H.B.	J. Gaston	Pharmaceutics:	A. Germakovski
Comparative Lit:	absent	Pharm. & Tox:	absent
CSE:	M. Lary	Philosophy:	inactive
CSEP:	R. Lelito	Physical Therapy:	absent
ELP:	absent	Physics:	P. Young
Electrical Engineering:	absent	Political Science:	S. Krzemian
English:	T. Murter	Psychology:	B. Greene
Environment & Sus:	R. Schultz	RLL:	J. Garcia Ramirez
EEH:	E. Odiko	Social Work:	absent
ENS:	A. Gabel	Sociology:	G. Ceja Morales
Geography:	F. Adegbola	Speech:	absent
Geology:	absent	Theatre & Dance:	I. Downes
Global Gender Studies:	J. Allen	Urban Planning:	A. Andrzejewski

International Clubs:

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

Special Interest Clubs:

Cognitive Science:	A. Ampiah-Bonney	GIGS:	inactive
GradSWE:	inactive	GSPHA:	inactive
Graduate Poetics:	A. VanSteinberg	UB Sci & Health Policy:	inactive
Grad Students of Color:	S. Caliste	UBQ:	S. King-Shaw

Guests:

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

1. President Isaac Kolding calls the meeting to order at 6:31pm.

2. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes from the September 4th Board of Directors Meeting
 - Motion: Computer Science Engineering
 - Second: Environment & Sustainability
 - In Favor: 42; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 6
 - Motion passes
- There is a question about the amount of detail listed in the minutes relating to discussions and it is stated that the minutes are not meant to be a transcript of the entire meeting. However, we will do our best to be more detailed in the future, when necessary. Board members are also able to offer amendments to the minutes prior to the vote for approval.

3. Announcements

- The 2024-2025 Board of Directors meeting schedule was attached in the meeting packet. Please mark your calendars.
- Programming
 - GSA Programming Coordinator Jamison Garcia Ramirez reviews the upcoming events:
 - October 4th- North Campus Java Junction, 11:00am – 1:00pm in 145C&D Student Union
 - Free Tim Horton's coffee and donuts for graduate students
 - October 7th- More Discount AMC Movie Tickets Available
 - \$5 each. 1 per UB ID.
 - Reserve online and pick up at the UB Ticket Office in 221 Student Union.
 - October 9th- GSA Officer Q&A Meeting, 10:00am – 11:00am in 210 Student Union
 - Meet with the GSA E-board and staff to ask questions about policies and procedures
 - An additional virtual meeting date will be offered if there is enough demand
 - October 11th- South Campus Java Junction, 11:00am – 1:00pm in 105 Harriman Hall
 - Free Tim Horton's coffee and donuts for graduate students
 - October 14th and 15th- GSA will be closed for Fall Break
 - October 16th- Distinguished Speaker Series presents Jon Meacham, 7:00pm at CFA
 - Free tickets available now. 1 per UB ID.
 - Limited quantity available. First come, first served.
 - October 26th- Fall Fest at Becker Farms
 - Tickets on sale October 7th for \$10 each. 2 per UB ID.
 - Optional bus transportation from North Campus available.
 - Limited quantity available. First come, first served.
 - November 22nd- **& Juliet** at Shea's Performing Arts Center, 7:30pm
 - Tickets on sale October 21st for \$25 each. 2 per UB ID.
 - Limited quantity available. First come, first served.
 - ANNOUNCEMENT- Those students who purchase tickets for **Hamilton** will NOT be eligible to purchase tickets for **& Juliet** in November

4. Report of the President

- GSA President Isaac Kolding discusses potential changes to PhD funding
 - CAS is looking to limit funding to a maximum of 5 years for PhD students. They believe this will lead to better outcomes for students and will help them to save money. CAS is going to start reviewing all offer letters made to PhD students before they are sent out. You will be grandfathered in if you already have an offer letter, but new offers will be impacted. The details are still in flux and the timeline is unclear. Changes may be felt differently across the various departments, but there are some legitimate concerns for how this will impact students in the Humanities.
 - If you think you will be impacted by this change, please contact your DGS, Advisor, and the GSA President (gsa-president@buffalo.edu) as soon as possible.
 - The E-board will be meeting with the Graduate School soon and plans to bring up this issue. We will keep everyone updated as more information becomes available.
- Updates on Policy Review Group for Speech, Assembly, Camping and Mutual Aid Policies
 - Isaac explains that the new, updated policy (available in the UB Policy Library) is now in a 14-day review period. The policy review group will be meeting on October 14th to discuss further changes. Isaac states that he would characterize the new assembly and posting policies are fairly permissive and viewpoint neutral on speech. They have clarified and moderated some of the regulations for audio amplification to be more permissive. The posting policy now allows for chalking and removes the requirement for attribution on posting, meaning anonymous posting will be permitted. The review committee still has questions about projections that they hope will be addressed. There are no changes to the camping policy, which are very broad, and the committee still hopes to address these concerns as well. Finally, there are no substantive updates on the mutual aid policy because that review group is still researching norms and potential changes.

5. Report of the Vice President

- GSA Vice President Sarah MacDougall reviews the UBLinked deadline of October 15th for University-wide recognition.
 - Budgets will be frozen by the University (not GSA) for the entire year if this is not completed on time.
- Important Rule Recaps
 - Club Officers and Board of Directors members are different positions and should be elected separately.
 - If your officers are going to fill the Board roles, they need to be elected into both positions by club members via UBLinked.
 - Board meeting representation and attendance requirements
 - All elected Board seats must be filled in order for the club's attendance to be counted in full.
 - All representatives must be present from the beginning to the end of the meeting. Times are logged automatically by Zoom.
 - If you miss two consecutive Board meetings in a row, then your club's budget will be frozen until full representation is resumed at a future Board meeting.

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: \$15,000.00 to start; \$1,150.00 recommended; \$13,850.00 remaining
 - Interdepartmental Activity: \$4,000.00 to start; \$0.00 recommended; \$4,000.00 remaining
 - Symposium: \$15,000.00 to start; \$0.00 recommended; \$15,000.00 remaining
 - Scholarly publication: \$10,000.00 to start; \$0.00 recommended; \$10,000.00 remaining
 - Community outreach: \$5,000.00 to start; \$0.00 recommended; \$5,000.00 remaining
- Conference Funding
 - 68 requests in October for \$25,692.96; 68 applications approved for \$25,692.96
 - Beginning balance: \$250,000.00; Remaining balance: \$205,806.01

7. Old Business

- Board of Directors Training Review and Q&A
 - GSA Legal Counsel Josh Lippes reviews the main points from the BoardStrong training, which include the Duty of Obedience, the Duty of Care, and the Duty of Loyalty.
 - Anyone with questions or concerns can reach out to Josh at any time at jlippes@lippeslaw.com.
- Policy Receipt Acknowledgments
 - Isaac reminds everyone on that the GSA Conflict of Interest Policy and the Whistleblower Policy were distributed in the meeting packet. Everyone should keep a copy for their records.
 - Each club must have at least one person sign and return the Policy Receipt Acknowledgment form to Diane at dstaly@buffalo.edu by the end of the night.
- Approval of Election Committee Chair
 - Sarah states that the GSA Election Committee has met and elected Devaleena Kalita (Chemistry) as this year's Election Committee Chair. We need a vote to confirm her position.
 - Motion to approve Election Committee Chair
 - Motion: Art
 - Second: Computer Science Engineering
 - In Favor: 44; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 4
 - Motion passes
 - The Election Code will be revised and reviewed for approval at the November Board of Directors Meeting.
- Call for and Approval of Ethics Officer
 - Isaac calls for a volunteer who is an independent member (a Board member- not an Alternate- who is not an officer or employee of GSA, or an officer for a GSA club). Josh states that in his 12 years as legal counsel there has only ever been one investigation, and it didn't require much time.
 - Sarah Krzemien (Political Science) volunteers
 - Motion to approve Ethics Officer
 - Motion: Art
 - Second: Computer Science Engineering
 - In Favor: 45; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 3
 - Motion passes

8. New Business

- Budget Amendment Proposal
 - Tamara states that based on the discussions from the April Board of Directors meeting, and at the recommendation of our Accountant, the Finance Committee is proposing some reallocations to the 2024-2025 Budget.
 - Reduce underutilized group funding opportunities back to 2023-2024 levels in order to increase club budgets

- Scholarly Publication: \$10,000 to \$6,000
- Symposia: \$15,000 to \$10,000
- Special Activity: \$15,000 to \$10,000
- Interdepartmental Activity: \$4,000 to \$3,000
- Community Outreach: \$5,000 to \$3,000
- Club budgets will have a variable base amount depending on club size (\$500 vs. \$550/\$600/\$650/\$700) and an increase in the amount per student from \$16 to \$18
- Special Interest and International club budgets will increase by \$100
- Reduce the over-allocation to conference funding (\$250,000 to \$225,000)
- Increase Programming line to from \$50,000 to \$90,000
- Allocate \$300,000 of the surplus balance from the previous fiscal year to GSA Reserve Account in lieu of the \$50,000 annual allocation
 - Interest made on investments will support contributions to the reserve account moving forward
- Allocate \$20,000 of the surplus to Capital Equipment to prepare for future GSA office moving expenses
- Increase GSA Student Staff Stipends to \$20,000 each and Hourly wages to \$22 per hour
- Motion to approve proposed budget amendments
 - Motion: Computer Science Engineering
 - Second: Anthropology
 - In Favor: 41; Oppose: 1; Abstain: 8
 - Motion passes
- Club Recognition
 - Sarah reports that each of these groups are being recommended for recognition with full funding after completing the required paperwork.
 - Representatives from GISA and Cognitive Science give a brief description about each of their clubs.
 - Motion to approve the clubs as a block at the recommended amounts
 - Motion: Computer Science Engineering
 - Second: Civil, Structural & Environmental Engineering
 - In Favor: 46; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 3
 - Motion passes
 - It is clarified that the recommended amounts for these clubs will be updated accordingly based on the recently passed budget changes.
- Funding Requests
 - Tamara reports that the Finance Committee has reviewed the one Special Activity application that was received and is recommending full funding, with the stipulation that the group must meet the minimum co-sponsorship requirements to qualify for funding.
 - A representative from Pharmaceutical Sciences gives a brief description of their Distinguished Alumni Symposium
 - Motion to approve the Special Activity funding request, with the stipulation, at the recommended amount
 - Motion: Geography
 - Second: Psychology
 - In Favor: 43; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 6
 - Motion passes

9. Roll Call and Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn at 7:28pm
 - Motion: Geography
 - Second: Political Science
 - In favor: 46; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 4
 - Motion passes