

Minutes of the Graduate Student Association Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, February 5, 2025

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:	C. Davis	History:	absent
Anthropology:	L. Quarles	ISE:	inactive
Architecture:	S. Zarub/ J. Ferreiras	Information Science:	M. Kimick
Art:	A. Montoya	LAI:	D. James
Audiology:	M. Tumminaro	Linguistics:	J. Pokorski
Biochemistry:	M. Goldberg	Materials Design & In:	E. Chen
Biological Sciences:	B. Liu	Mathematics:	inactive
Biomedical Engineering:	absent	MAE:	A. Nayyar/ A. Devra
Biostatistics:	Y.L. Liu	Media Study:	C. Hansen
Cancer Sciences- RPCCC:	absent	Microbiology:	absent
Chem. & Bio. Eng:	O. Desai	Music:	absent
Chemistry:	B. Kumara (absent 1/2)	Neuroscience:	A. Tranquille
CSEE:	M.Daud (absent 1/2)	Nursing:	inactive
Classics:	M. Barcarolo	Occupational Therapy:	B. Osborne/ R. Guy
Communication:	D. Kulesza	Oral Biology:	D. Leyva
Comm. Health & H.B.	J. Gaston	Pharmaceutics:	M. Zhao
Comparative Lit:	inactive	Pharm. & Tox:	S. Narwekar
CSE:	M. Lary	Philosophy:	inactive
CSEP:	R. Lelito	Physical Therapy:	absent
ELP:	J. Holmes	Physics:	P. Young
Electrical Engineering:	B.M. Antoine/ S. Basu	Political Science:	S. Krzemien
English:	absent	Psychology:	N. Zedomi
Environment & Sus:	R. Schultz	RLL:	J. Garcia Ramirez
EEH:	E. Odiko	Social Work:	A. Tatarka
ENS:	A. Gabel	Sociology:	G.C. Morales
Geography:	absent	Speech:	M. Marsh/ H. Miller
Geology:	K. Eaman	Theatre & Dance:	I. Downes
Global Gender Studies:	S. Maza	Urban Planning:	A. Andrzejewski

International Clubs:

Bangladeshi:	N.A. Nepa	Latin American:	M. Riquelme Gonzalez
Indian:	V. Maheshkar	Nigerian:	S. Fagbohunlu
Iranian:	H. Naeimi		

Special Interest Clubs:

Cognitive Science:	S.A. Mirkoohi	Grad Students of Color	S. Caliste
Graduate Poetics:	A. VanSteinberg	UBQ:	C. Doubek

Guests:

J. Lippes	Legal
N. Koefler	Psychology-BBSS
D. McNulty	GPD

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

2. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes from the December 4<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors Meeting
  - Motion: Computer Science Engineering (CSE)
  - Second: Chemical & Biological Engineering (CBE)
  - In Favor: 41; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 5
  - Motion passes

3. Announcements

- Delaney McNulty from the Graduate Professional Development Office explains there are many opportunities available to graduate students for professional development. She encourages everyone to read the Graduate Brief emails for more details on specific events and offerings. The Art of Research Competition is coming up soon, with a deadline for submissions on March 10<sup>th</sup>. The office has partnered with many other offices on campus, such as Disability Services and the Career Design Center, to develop a variety of programs to help graduate students. She also encourages students in the College of Arts and Sciences to participate in the public interviews being held for the new CAS Dean. Interviews start next week and you can attend in person or via Zoom.
  - For more information, please contact Delaney at [prov.mcnulty5@provost.buffalo.edu](mailto:prov.mcnulty5@provost.buffalo.edu)
- Programming
  - GSA Programming Coordinator Jamison Garcia Ramirez reviews the upcoming events:
  - 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.
  - February 7<sup>th</sup>, North Campus Java Junction, 11am to 1pm
    - Free Tim Horton's coffee and donuts for graduate students in 145C&D Student Union
  - February 12<sup>th</sup>, Distinguished Speaker Series presents Misty Copeland
    - Free tickets still available for graduate students. 1 per UB ID.
    - Reserve online and digital admission tickets will be emailed out approximately 24 hours before the show.
  - February 14<sup>th</sup>, South Campus Java Junction, 11am to 1pm
    - Free Tim Horton's coffee and donuts for graduate students in 105 Harriman Hall
  - March 7<sup>th</sup>- ***The Wiz*** at Shea's Performing Arts Center
    - Tickets on sale February 10<sup>th</sup> for \$25 each. 2 per UB ID. Limited quantity available.
    - Reserve online and digital admission tickets will be emailed out approximately 24 hours before the show.
  - March 26<sup>th</sup>- ***Shucked*** at Shea's Performing Arts Center
    - Tickets on sale February 24<sup>th</sup> for \$25 each. 2 per UB ID. Limited quantity available.
    - Reserve online and digital admission tickets will be emailed out approximately 24 hours before the show.
  - **ANNOUNCEMENT- Those students who purchase tickets for *The Wiz* will NOT be eligible to purchase tickets for *Shucked***
- Isaac reminds students that the MDRF Spring Grant Application Deadline is Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup> by 3:00pm
  - For research to be conducted between May 1, 2025 and April 30, 2026

4. Report of the President

- GSA President Isaac Kolding discusses the Welcome Week Recap
  - GSA tabled at several events and met with many new students interested in getting involved with their clubs. He encourages club leaders to be welcoming to all new students.
- Request for Information
  - Isaac is looking for more information about PhD students teaching graduate courses or large lecture courses. Please email [gsa-president@buffalo.edu](mailto:gsa-president@buffalo.edu) if you have any information about this, specifically if they are the official instructor on record.
- Impact of Federal Changes on Graduate Students
  - Isaac reports that there have been large freezes implemented on federal grants. If your research is funded by a federal grant, you may be impacted. If you are unsure, please check with your PI. Currently funded students who are funded through New York State should not be at risk, but that could change.
  - PhD admissions have been suspended by CAS and parts of SEAS. There has been no indication about when the suspension might be lifted.
  - The impact on University EDI programming is unclear at this time, as the definition of what constitutes EDI programming is difficult to determine. There does not currently appear to be any indication of changes at UB.
  - Student loans and Pell grants are likely unaffected, according to Isaac's research, though this has not been confirmed by the University.
  - ICE and campus safety are addressed. There is a New York State Executive Order requiring a signed warrant for any arrests that are to be made on state property. FIRPA regulations prevent University staff from discussing or revealing

any students' personal characteristics. There have been reports of fake ICE officers on campuses around the country, but nothing like that has been reported at UB. However, if you feel unsafe at any time, please call the University Police.

- Additional updates will be provided as more information is received, or you can contact Isaac at [gsa-president@buffalo.edu](mailto:gsa-president@buffalo.edu) with any questions or concerns.

#### 5. Report of the Vice President

- GSA Vice President Sarah MacDougall informs the Board that GSA will be proposing a few By Law amendments at the next Board of Directors meeting to standardize the language and requirements for all club elections and club meeting quorums.
  - Amending the GSA By Laws will avoid forcing all clubs to amend their own By Laws to comply with the new, standardized requirements. This will make it easier for GSA to monitor groups and make sure everyone is following best practices.
    - GSA By Laws supersede all club By Laws. This means club By Laws will essentially become null and void. Clubs are welcome to create their own, new internal policies as long as they are more stringent than those that will be outlined in the GSA By Laws.
  - Quorum will be a minimum of ten students. For groups with 20 or fewer students, quorum will be 50% plus one.
    - Online polls will no longer be allowed, as according to New York State not for profit laws, online votes require near unanimous consent from all members.
  - Elections must be conducted on UBLinked for all club officers and Board of Directors members as per GSA and University policies. Election policies will be standardized as well for simplicity across all groups.
  - Josh Lippes, GSA's legal representative, explains a bit of the history surrounding the need for these changes. When GSA became an independently incorporated 501(c)(3) in 2019, many of our rules had to change. GSA clubs had always been unincorporated groups that were part of the University. It has been a process to update all of our regulations, and putting the additional language into the GSA By Laws for the universal functions of clubs seems to be the best way to address the issues we keep facing. Josh will work on drafting the specific language for these changes and entering them into the appropriate section of the existing By Laws. The amendments will be read at the March Board meeting and voted on at the April meeting, to comply with GSA amendment protocols. In the meantime, any questions can be addressed to Josh directly at [jlippes@lippeslaw.com](mailto:jlippes@lippeslaw.com).

#### 6. Report of the Treasurer

- GSA Treasurer Tamara Grosso discusses funding account balances
  - We have two Symposium funding requests this month, so balances are as follows:
    - Special Activity: (updated balance) \$10,000.00 to start; \$0.00 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; \$2,800.00 recommended; \$5,800.00 remaining
    - Scholarly Publication: (updated balance) \$6,000.00 to start; \$0.00 recommended; \$4,525.00 remaining (final application deadline has passed)
    - Community Outreach: (updated balance) \$3,000.00 to start; \$0.00 recommended; \$3,000.00 remaining
- Conference Funding
  - 21 applications for January requesting \$6,068.51; 19 applications approved for \$5,318.51 (1 application was rejected for being late and one student had previously reached their funding maximum). 18 applications for February requesting \$7,154.10; 17 applications approved for \$6,404.10 (1 application was withdrawn)
  - Updated beginning balance: \$225,000.00; Remaining balance: \$152,143.05
- Call for Finance Committee Members
  - A few of our current Finance Committee members have either graduated, or have scheduling conflicts with the meeting times for the Spring semester
    - We need 2-3 new volunteers for the committee to make sure the meetings hit quorum to hold votes
    - Meetings are held the Wednesday before each Board of Directors meeting. There are two meetings remaining to be held on February 26<sup>th</sup> and March 26<sup>th</sup>.
  - Omkar Desai from Chemical & Biological Engineering and Milagros Riquelme Gonzalez from Pharmaceutical Sciences volunteer.
  - Motion to approve the new Finance Committee members
    - Motion: Political Science
    - Second: Biochemistry
    - In Favor: 44; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 1
    - Motion passes
- Interdepartmental Activity Funding Highlight
  - This fund was created to encourage social and academic activities that foster interdisciplinary scholarship and/or relationships between students of different departments.
  - Any group of two or more Departmental GSA clubs may request funding.

- The formula for funding is  $n \times m$  where  $n$  is the number of participating departmental clubs, and  $m$  is the lowest monetary contribution of any participating club.
- The maximum amount for an event with only two clubs participating is \$500, and the maximum increases by \$50 for each additional participating departmental club, up to an absolute maximum of \$750 for an event with 7 departmental clubs participating (e.g., 3 clubs are eligible for \$550, 4 clubs are eligible for \$600, etc.)
- All clubs are encouraged to apply!

#### 7. Old Business

- No Old Business

#### 8. New Business

- Funding Requests
  - Tamara reports that the Finance Committee has reviewed the two Symposia funding applications that were included with the Board meeting packet and they are recommending both for full funding.
  - Nicole Koepler from Psychology GSA gives a brief description of the Behavior and Brain Sciences Symposium, and Jamison Garcia Ramirez from Romance Languages and Literatures GSA gives a brief description of the UB Graduate Workshops on Romance Languages, Literatures and Discourses (WORLLD).
  - Motion to approve both Symposium funding requests as a block at the recommended amounts
    - Motion: Media Study
    - Second: Chemical & Biological Engineering (CBE)
    - In Favor: 41; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 4
    - Motion passes
- Election Committee Update
  - In the Election Committee Chair, Devaleena Kalita's absence, Stephanie George, GSA Director of Operations, reminds students that Candidate Petition Packets are now available.
    - Email the Election Committee Chair: Devaleena Kalita ([devaleen@buffalo.edu](mailto:devaleen@buffalo.edu))
    - Deadline for Submission is Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup> by 4:30pm
    - Candidates must have attended two Board Meetings within the past twelve months, and must attend the February, March, and April Board of Directors meetings to be eligible.
    - Candidates must be "physically present at University at Buffalo and available to serve the full one-year term from June 1, 2025 through May 31, 2026."
- Isaac makes a last-minute announcement about an event that was just brought to his attention. There will be an International Student Town Hall meeting held by ISS on Wednesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 – 1:30pm in the Student Union Theatre to discuss recent US Immigration Topics.
  - This information will be posted to the GSA website.

#### 9. Roll Call and Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn at 7:23pm
  - Motion: Biochemistry
  - Second: Chemical & Biological Engineering (CBE)
  - In favor: 47; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 3
  - Motion passes