

Minutes of the Graduate Student Association Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, April 2, 2025

Attendance:

Officers & Staff:

President:	I. Kolding	Programming:	
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:	K. Kostin
Anthropology:	L. Quarles	ISE:	inactive
Architecture:	S. Kattel/ S. Zarub	Information Science:	absent
Art:	M. Killian	LAI:	D. James
Audiology:	M. Tumminaro	Linguistics:	J. Pokorski
Biochemistry:	M. Goldberg	Materials Design & Info:	E. Chen
Biological Sciences:	B. Liu	Mathematics:	inactive
Biomedical Engineering:	R. Bing	MAE:	A. Nayyar (absent 1/2)
Biostatistics:	Y.L. Liu	Media Study:	C. Hansen
Cancer Sciences- RPCCC:	A. Das/ T. Shah	Microbiology:	absent
Chem. & Bio. Eng:	O. Desai	Music:	absent
Chemistry:	D. Edirisinghe/ B. Kumara	Neuroscience:	A. Tranquille
CSEE:	absent	Nursing:	inactive
Classics:	M. Barcarolo	Occupational Therapy:	B. Osborne/ R. Guy
Communication:	I. Andreeva	Oral Biology:	S. Biswas
Comm. Health & H.B.	J. Gaston	Pharmaceuticals:	R.R. Karthikeyan
Comparative Lit:	inactive	Pharm. & Tox:	S. Narwekar
CSE:	M. Lary	Philosophy:	inactive
CSEP:	B. Wells	Physical Therapy:	J. Manning/ C. Scampoli
ELP:	J. Holmes	Physics:	P. Young
Electrical Engineering:	S. Basu/ S. Mundaganur	Political Science:	S. Krzemien
English:	absent	Psychology:	N. Zedomi
Environment & Sus:	R. Schultz	RLL:	S. Jameson-Blowers
EEH:	absent	Social Work:	A. Tatarka
ENS:	A. Gabel	Sociology:	G.C. Morales
Geography:	F. Adegbola	Speech:	M. Marsh/ J. Flint
Geology:	K. Eaman	Theatre & Dance:	I. Downes
Global Gender Studies:	M.L. Nutting	Urban Planning:	A. Andrzejewski

International Clubs:

Bangladeshi:	A. Islam	Latin American:	A. Alfaro Chacon
Indian:	V. Maheshkar	Nigerian:	S. Fagbohunlu
Iranian:	H. Naeimi		

Special Interest Clubs:

Cognitive Science:	A. Ampiah-Bonney	Grad Students of Color:	E. Adams
Graduate Poetics Group:	A. VanSteinberg	UBQ:	C. Doubek

Guests:

J. Lippes	Legal	S. King-Shaw	GGS
D. Kalita	Electon Committee Chair	S.Abdavinejad Mirkoohi	EEB
I. Roma	Political Science		

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

2. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes from the March 5<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors Meeting
  - Motion: Geography
  - Second: Chemical & Biological Engineering (CBE)
  - In Favor: 53; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 0
  - Motion passes

3. Announcements

- Programming
  - GSA Director of Operations, Stephanie George, reviews the upcoming events in the Programming Coordinator's absence:
  - April 4<sup>th</sup> - North Campus Java Junction 11:00am – 1:00pm in 145 C&D Student Union
    - Free Tim Horton's coffee and donuts for graduate students
  - April 7<sup>th</sup> - More Discount AMC Movie Tickets Now Available
    - \$5 each. 1 per UB ID. Limited quantity available.
    - Be sure to pick up physical tickets from the UB Ticket Office in 221 Student Union
  - April 7<sup>th</sup> - Discount Buffalo Bisons Flex Passes Available
    - \$10 each. 1 per UB ID. Limited quantity available.
    - Be sure to pick up physical tickets from the UB Ticket Office in 221 Student Union
  - April 11<sup>th</sup> - South Campus Java Junction, 11:00am – 1:00pm in 105 Harriman Hall
    - Free Tim Horton's coffee and donuts for graduate students
  - May 2<sup>nd</sup> - Final North Campus Java Junction, 11:00am – 1:00pm in 145 C&D Student Union
  - May 5<sup>th</sup> - Last batch of Discount AMC Movie Tickets Available for this year
  - May 9<sup>th</sup> - Final South Campus Java Junction 11:00am – 1:00pm in 105 Harriman Hall
  - Coming Soon!!
    - Discount Buffalo Zoo Tickets
    - Shakespeare in Delaware Park - July 12<sup>th</sup> and August 15<sup>th</sup>
    - Moondance Cruise – July 11<sup>th</sup>
    - Discount Six Flags Darien Lake Tickets for July 26<sup>th</sup>
    - And much more!
- Isaac reminds students that GSA Summer Hours will begin on Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>
  - Monday – Thursday, 8:30am to 4:00pm, closed on Fridays
  - Regular hours will resume with the start of the Fall semester on August 25<sup>th</sup>

4. Report of the President

- GSA President, Isaac Kolding, discusses information for international graduate students
  - He reminds students that the only people allowed to address inquiries from federal law enforcement officers are the University's council and/or University Police. He reviews and shares links for SUNY policies, US Laws and your rights, and a list of resources from the Office of Inclusive Excellence.
- Isaac provides an update on PhD funding an cohorts and reports that the administration views offer letters as an obligation to honor, so they plan to continue funding students for whatever they were promised, despite the uncertainty surrounding some of the federal funding and grants.
- Isaac invites all students who have questions or concerns to contact him at [gsa-president@buffalo.edu](mailto:gsa-president@buffalo.edu) as he will be having dinner with top administrators within the next few days and is happy to bring up any issues with them directly.

5. Report of the Vice President

- GSA Vice President, Sarah MacDougall, has nothing new to report.

6. Report of the Treasurer

- GSA Treasurer, Tamara Grosso, reports on the following:
- Funding Account Balances
  - We have two Symposia funding requests and one Interdepartmental Activity request this month, so balances are as follows:
    - Special Activity: (updated balance) \$10,000.00 to start; \$0.00 recommended this month; \$4,250.00 remaining
    - Interdepartmental Activity: (updated balance) \$3,000.00 to start; \$500.00 recommended; \$2,500.00 remaining
    - Symposium: (updated balance) \$10,000.00 to start; \$2,100.00 recommended; \$3,700.00 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; \$2,750.00 remaining
- Conference Funding

- 42 applications for April requesting \$19,808.77; 41 applications approved for \$19,058.77 (1 application was rejected for being ineligible).
- Updated beginning balance: \$225,000.00; Remaining balance: \$120,719.59
- Club Budgets
  - Clubs will have until June 1<sup>st</sup> to requisition any remaining funds and until July 15<sup>th</sup> to spend them.
    - All requisitions must be accompanied by club minutes pre-approving the expenses (at a club meeting that meets quorum) by the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline and all in-person events must be approved on UBLinked.
  - The new fiscal year begins on August 1<sup>st</sup>.
    - This year's budget cannot be used to pay for next year's expenses.
- RLL Symposium Budget Change Request
  - RLL would like to add the purchase of water bottles for all presenters to their previously approved Symposium budget.
  - This would add an \$800 expense to the budget, but would not change the amount of Symposium funding approved (\$1,400).
  - Due to the substantial change, Tamara are requesting a vote to approve the updated budget.
  - Sydney Jameson-Blowers from RLL explains that the organizers selected cheaper options for food and did not end up needing to pay for reserving space on campus, so they would like to offer these gifts as a token of appreciation with the additional funding that is now available.
  - Motion to approve RLL Symposium budget change request
    - Motion: Geography
    - Second: Anthropology
    - In Favor: 47; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 2
    - Motion passes

## 7. Old Business

- By Law Amendments
  - Sarah explains that the need for these changes has been discussed over the past several meetings. The changes were read at the previous meeting and now much be voted on for approval. We will be adding the following to Article X Clubs under Section 2 Recognition of Clubs:
 

[F] Each club must adopt and adhere to the GSA's "Template Rules and Policies for Clubs and Organizations" to be officially recognized.

[G] Each club must adhere to the GSA's minimum club meeting quorum requirement to be officially recognized. Club quorum must be no less than 50% of the total membership plus one for clubs with eighteen or fewer members, and no less than ten members for clubs with eighteen or more members. Clubs may choose to set a higher quorum requirement at their discretion. The use of online polls to achieve quorum is prohibited.

[H] Each club election of Officers and Board of Directors members must reach quorum and be conducted on UBLinked to be officially recognized.
  - There is discussion to review in more detail the logic and need for these changes, so that GSA remains in compliance with all non-profit laws.
  - Motion to approve the By Law Amendments
    - Motion: Biochemistry
    - Second: Political Science
    - In Favor: 43; Oppose: 3; Abstain: 3
  - GSA Legal Counsel, Josh Lippes, reminds the Board that we need 3/4 approval of those voting members present to pass a By Law amendment, and it is determined that we need 45 votes to approve these changes.
    - Motion to rerun the vote to approve the By Law Amendments
    - Motion: Electrical Engineering
    - Second: Biochemistry
    - In Favor: 46; Oppose: 2; Abstain: 3
    - Motion passes

## 8. New Business

- Early Club Recognition
  - Sarah explains that all Special Interest and International clubs must be recognized annually. By completing the Early Recognition process, clubs will have access to their budgets immediately at the start of the new fiscal year on August 1<sup>st</sup>. All currently recognized Special Interest and International clubs have applied and Sarah is recommending that they all be approved. International clubs will receive \$850 each, and Special Interest clubs will receive \$400 to start the year

with additional funding (up to another \$400 each) being awarded after the December, 2025 Board of Directors meeting, once all new clubs have received funding.

- Representatives from Bangladeshi GSA, Graduate Indian Student Association (GISA), Iranian GSA, Latin American GSA, Nigerian GSA, Cognitive Science, Graduate Students of Color (GSOC), Graduate Poetics Group (GPG), and UBQ all give a brief description of their club's mission and activities.
  - Motion to approve all clubs as a block at the recommended amounts
  - Motion: Romance Languages & Literatures
  - Second: Media Study
  - In Favor: 50; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 0
  - Motion passes
- Funding Requests
  - Tamara reports that the Finance Committee has reviewed the two Symposia funding applications and the one Interdepartmental Activity request that were included with the Board meeting packet and they are recommending all of them for full funding.
  - Sam King-Shaw from GGS gives a brief description of the Global Gender Studies and Sexuality Studies Symposium and Dulan Edirisinghe from Chemistry gives brief presentations about both the Graduate Student Symposium and the Chemistry and Physics Mixer.
  - Motion to approve all funding requests as a block at the recommended amounts
    - Motion: Biochemistry
    - Second: Geography
    - In Favor: 44; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 3
    - Motion passes
- Approval of 2025-2026 Budget
  - Tamara reviews the proposed budget that has been approved by the GSA Finance Committee. She explains that enrollment is trending down, so anticipated revenues are being reduced accordingly. She states that most other changes are due to contractual obligations and/or projected price increases due to inflation. She explains that there are some minor reallocations to funds to account for changes in our operational needs, and that we are reducing Programming and increasing MDRF allocations to as per the needs of each service.
  - Additionally, while there is no change to the overall allocation to the conference funding budget line, we are proposing some changes to the application policies as follows:
    - Phrase "in their graduate career" changed to "for the duration of their current degree program"
    - Master's limit changed from \$550 to \$625
    - Doctoral limit changed from \$750 to \$825
    - Attendance only limit changed from \$200 to \$275
  - Tamara asks for a motion to approve these changes separately from the rest of the budget
    - Motion to approve changes to conference funding
    - Motion: Geography
    - Second: Romance Languages & Literatures
    - In Favor: 52; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 1
    - Motion passes
  - Tamara continues to review the proposed budget line by line and asks for questions
    - Motion to approve the 2025-2026 budget
    - Motion: Anthropology
    - Second: Geology
    - In Favor: 51; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 1
    - Motion passes
  - It is noted that the April 23<sup>rd</sup> Board of Directors meeting will now be canceled since the budget has passed.
- Election Committee Update
  - Election Committee Chair, Devaleena Kalita, presents the ballot for approval by the Board of Directors, as required by the Election Code
    - Motion to approve the ballot
    - Motion: Romance Languages & Literatures
    - Second: Neuroscience
    - In Favor; 48; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 1
    - Motion passes
  - Devaleena explains the format for the candidate Q&A
    - Two minutes for each candidate to introduce themselves
    - Candidates will answer 2 questions from the Election Committee. Each candidate has two minutes to answer

- Board members will be allowed to ask Candidates questions in an open forum for up to 15 minutes.
- Each candidate will be given 60 seconds to respond or choose not to answer.
- 60 seconds for closing remarks for candidates
- Sarah MacDougall (for President), Sevda Abdavinejad Mirkoohi (for Vice President), and Isaac Kolding (for Treasurer) all give their introductions, answer questions related to their qualifications, changes they will propose, challenges they expect to face, and plans for future improvements, then each give their closing remarks.
- Isaac reminds everyone that voting will take place online via a link on the GSA website starting Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at 12:00am and running through Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm. Results will be announced on Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup> on the GSA listservs and on the website.

#### 9. Roll Call and Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn at 8:17pm
  - Motion: Biochemistry
  - Second: Neuroscience
  - In favor: 46; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 0
  - Motion passes