

## **GSA Legislative Assembly Meeting Minutes 3/11/08**

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Graduate Student Association (GSA) met on Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in the East Campus Union's Sunflower Room. Dean Weissinger provided a complete pasta bar. Attendance included 32 departmental representatives, 6 executive committee members, 1 advisor, and 1 guest.

Minutes of the February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008 meeting were e-mailed and presented to the LA. Ala' Qadi (Computer Science) moved to approve the minutes, Erica Schauer (Modern Languages) seconded, and the motion passed. All officer and committee reports were presented:

- UPC granted the entire award request for GSAW

Mike Moses, Lincoln International Networking Community (LINC)—International student mentoring program:

- Was unable to attend the meeting (I personally can't believe he missed the Pasta, but I understand he probably leads a pretty busy schedule)

Guest Speaker: Dr. Ellen Weissinger, Dean of Graduate Studies:

- First, Dr. Weissinger attended the Quality of Life committee meeting and expressed her gratitude to the committee for their work throughout the semester. She wants to follow up with Student Health about Health Care costs and policies for Graduate Students.
- There will be a change to the Doctoral Hooding Ceremony. The Hooding Ceremony traditionally took place before commencement and Doctoral Students would wait for their diploma. Now there will be a separate Graduate commencement where Doctoral Graduates will receive their diplomas and have a full commencement ceremony with the Doctoral Hooding.
- Dean Weissinger is also working closely with the College of Engineering to refine the program and dispel concerns of having schools within the college in Omaha and throughout the state.
- Finally, Dean Weissinger asked that the GSA initiate a task force for advancing and maintaining the standards of Academic Integrity within a graduate education.
- There have been several incidences of Academic Dishonesty in recent years at UNL, including expulsion and revocation of degree after graduation.
- Students may not realize the consequences of their actions.
- The Task Force will be designed to investigate why Academic Dishonesty is occurring, to communicate the ramifications thereto, and address these issues at three levels: the student, the faculty, and the University.
- Motion was made to make this task force a part of the Academic Affairs committee by Brenden Rensink (History), seconded by Sarah Vanness (Animal Sciences). Motion passed unanimously.
- Jenn Murray (Psychology) is a current member of the Academic Affairs committee and volunteered to lead the task force.
- If you are an LA member interested in the task force, you are encouraged to join the Academic Affairs committee.

- This semester will serve to determine the objectives and establish an on-going task force, with the aim that this will be an ongoing task force for years to follow in order to communicate more openly about Academic Integrity.

#### Proposal 3.1.08: GSA By-laws Amendments

- Motion to approve by Tamy Burnett (English), second by Brenden Rensink (History)
- Lee Dunham (VC of Legislative Affairs, Finance, Assistant Professor, Creighton) described the proposal, which is a change the procedure for amending the By-Laws. While it should be difficult to both bring and adopt an amendment to the GSA Constitution, the By-Laws should be slightly more fluid. The proposal calls for a 2 LA members to initiate an amendment at a meeting, then enlist support of 10% of the remaining LA body. With 10% support of the LA, the amendment will be brought to vote at the next regularly scheduled LA meeting. A quorum vote is needed for ratification.
- This process will be used to inact Proposal 3.1.08 which also includes minor changes to removal of committee members and chairs, and changes to duties and responsibilities to the VC of Internal Affairs, and VC of Public Relations.
- The VC of Internal Affairs will be granted the ability to “Remove committee chairs who fail to perform the necessary duties and responsibilities required of the position of committee chair”
- The VC of Public Relations will Chair the Social Events Committee.
- Dr. Hanna asked what other examples we had of proposed amendments to By-Laws from other student organizations. (And I must have had a mouth full of spaghetti cuz I didn’t write down the response! ☺)
- The Proposal was moved to acquire the 10% support of the LA.

#### Resolution 3.2.08

- Motion to approve by Kristin Javorsky (Teaching, Learning, and Teacher Education), seconded by Sarah Vanness (Animal Science)
- Brenda Pracheil (Chair of the Quality of Life Committee, Natural Resource Sciences) described the resolution which requests the university subsidization of tuition at the proposed University Child Care Center to allow graduate assistants to remain in good financial standing while covering childcare expenses.
- As it stands, the cost of the center would be ~\$800 per month, \$156 a week for a toddler. This is not affordable on a Graduate Stipend.
- 1/3 of Graduate Students have children, of which the majority are less than 2 years of age.
- A question was raised of justification of price. Is it comparable to other child care facilities in Lincoln. The answer seems no. The University Child Care Center seems more for convenience at this point. They do need to maintain a certain standard in child care for accreditation. However, the proposed child development is no more and much less than other facilities in Lincoln.
- A question of subsidizing Graduate Stipends with student loans was brought up. There are stipulations on the amount one can borrow, and what the money is used for. This is regardless of the fact that accumulating debt can ultimately be harmful to a student.

- The proposed start date of the Center is August of 2009. However, it is in Whiterier, no infants will be allowed, it will not be open in the summer, and there will be/already is a wait list.
- Why does this resolution only address GA's? Why not all graduate/professional students? –We will use this as a foot hold and go from there with more support if nothing changes.
- Undergraduate Interest? –Title 20 State Assistance can subsidize child care for undergraduates.
- What classification of student will qualify for this subsidy be it full-time, ¾ time, or 1 credit to continue your dissertation? –Dean Weisinger stated the center most likely would define this.
- Motion Passes Unanimously.

### Announcements

- Bowling, sponsored by GSA and the Social Events Committee, is immediately following the meeting at Lanes and Games, in the lower level of the East Campus Union.
- Elections for the Executive Committee will be held at the April meeting. Lee Dunham (VC of Legislative Affairs, Finance, Assistant Professor, Creighton) is taking nominations at this time. There will be a Leadership Development event held at the Rec. Center, April 6<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30 am. Lunch will be provided. The ropes challenge course will be undertaken.
- The Big Event is April 12<sup>th</sup>. GSA is working 1:00 pm until the end of the day.
- T-shirts are in. Please see Russell (Jimmy) Hendrix (Nutrition and Health Sciences) or Sunita Gupta (VC of Public Relations, Electrical Engineering and the College of Business Administration) with your money. (Sunita! I got my money! Honest!! ☺)
- GSAW is the week of March 31<sup>st</sup> to April 4<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are still needed for the Union Booth, Panel Discussion, and Kick Ball. Promote, Promote, Promote.
- Please be looking for BWB book-drive volunteers.
  
- Aubrey Fowler [(Business (Marketing))] moved to adjourn, \_\_\_\_\_ seconded, and the motion passed. Executive Chair Amber Epp closed the meeting at 7:17 pm. The next Legislative Assembly meeting is scheduled for April 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm in the East Campus Union.

Minutes submitted by Avery Paulson, VC of Information.