



Reminders:

- Fill out survey for Presidential Search at <http://www.esf.edu/presidential-search/> before Friday 4pm
- Stop by the office (Marshall B9A) to sign the letter for Presidential Search to the Board of Trustees before Monday 8am
- Send any suggestions for International Night to njcagide@syr.edu
- Send any agenda items for next meeting (October 28th) to Craig Lazzar (clazzar@syr.edu) as soon as possible

General meeting:

1. President call to order
2. Roll call by Secretary
 - o Quorum- Yes
3. Review and approval of meeting minutes:
 - o Motion to Approve Minutes from Bi-weekly Meeting on September 30th, 2013 and from Special Meeting on Presidential Search, held on October 7th: Owen Hunter
 - o Second: Stacey Mack
 - o Unanimously approved

New Business:

1. International Night:
 - Date and Time proposal (Natalia): Sunday November 10th, right before the International Week. This date could be an issue as the Social Committee's Harvest Potluck is scheduled for the same date. It'd be very beneficial to have the International Night on that date; it'd allow promoting other activities occurring during International Week and create connections among new international students.
 - Owen: As the argument is compelling, the Harvest Potluck will be moved to the following week, November 17th.
 - Natalia: The international committee will be working on pamphlets, food venues, musical groups, and others during the following weeks. Please send any ideas or suggestions you may have to njagide@syr.edu. The Committee will provide more details about this Event next meeting.

2. SUNY Student Assembly Fall Conference
 - Will be held on November 8-10 in Rochester, NY
 - The conference's theme is "Causes to care for", and will focus on advocacy, activism and leadership development. Some details available online at <http://www.studentassembly.org/wp-content/uploads/SUNYSA-Fall-2013-Conference-Packet.pdf>
 - The GSA holds 1 voting position at the Conference
 - Craig: Would anyone like to go, do we want to finance this? (\$120/person) Do you think it is of interest for us or should we pass on it?
 - Eugene: An issue of interest for the GSA could be the minimum stipend stated by the SUNY Administration, which determines the stipend our grads receive. The USA will send 2-3 people; maybe they can sponsor 1 GSA student, as it's important to hold that voting position. As USA President, Eugene advocated for the GSA to be granted that voting position.
 - What is the Agenda for the Conference?
 1. Not clear, but there is an app listed in the link (above), where you should be able to access it.
 2. Issues that have been addressed in the past include: Stipend, interest on student loan, tuition assistance. (Eugene)

- (Craig) If it was necessary, are we willing to use funding from the GSA budget to send someone to the SUNY Student Assembly Fall Conference?
 1. The majority of the senate expresses their interest in sending someone to the Conference, with GSA funding, if necessary
 2. There is concern, however, about decreases in budget. The Social Committee budgeted low and even made cuts, as it was indicated that new resources could be later allocated. It currently seems like there won't be new resources to allocate and new cuts do not seem like the best choice.
 - There could also be other sources of funding, such as: the Office of Communications, USA, or other entities at ESF.
3. Payment of fees to SU GSO
- SU GSO Executives contacted the GSA President regarding the payment of fees. An increase was approved during the spring semester.
 - Some of the questions were: How much would they be getting? Are these fees being collected? When will they officially receive this money?
 - Allison (Treasurer): We do not receive any information regarding SU student activities fees. SU GSO Executives should contact the Business Office at ESF or any other entity they have inquired in the past, regarding this matter.
4. Social Committee Updates
- Halloween TG: The posters to advertise the Halloween TG are available at the office for Department Representatives to take them and help out with promotion. Please, take a few per Department and hang them around.
 - Fright Night: Judy (SU GSO Social Chair) got tickets for Fright Night at the Fairgrounds to be distributed among SU and ESF grads. These tickets were free of charge and available at the Schine Box Office, presenting Student ID, one ticket per student, they sold out quickly.
5. Lunch Meeting with VP of Administration: Joe Rufo
- This meeting happens once a year
 - A few GSA Senators are expected to attend, probably VPs are preferred
 - There will be a doodle poll to determine availability and set up a meeting time

6. Letter to the Board of Trustees on the Presidential Search

- Review of the final draft form, final opportunity for any ESF grad students to comment and request changes
- General Discussion:
 1. Eileen: Add a sentence at the end of the first paragraph introducing and summarizing the main points to be described in the letter to ease the reading of it, by the Board and fellow grads
 2. Rigo: In the section referred to Partnerships, include NGOs, as contacts with non-research organizations may also be of value for the students (e.g. UNO)
 3. Abbie: The letter is a little confusing. It is unclear what do we want to convey. One thing will be addressing what would we like the new President to have as priorities, to assess the Board of Trustees in their recommendation; and a completely different matter is what we are as GSA, as if we were presenting ourselves to the new President.
 4. Craig: Maybe we should consider including the GSA mission. What we need or what we want as students should be major points.
 5. Natalia: This is something to say who we are and what are interested on bringing to the school, isn't it?
 6. What do we want the letter to be for? We could have two different letters, 1) the one we are working on, for the Board of Trustees and 2) write a different one, later on, addressing the new President (Scott)
- About funding
 1. Daniela: We should include the issues with funding: Resources are not only not increasing at the rate of the inflation, but also being cut progressively year by year, and nobody does anything to stop these cuts. This is an issue that the new President will have to face, and we should ask for someone who'd be willing and able to address it in the best possible way.
 2. Craig: Funding survey, (retrieved by Kelly Bancroft), indicate amount of funded grad students is high compared with unfunded students at the GPES department.
 3. Eileen: Quantity of funded students is not comparable with the quality of funding; this doesn't only refer to how many students receive a stipend, but what's the amount of the stipend, is there funding for research, attendance to conferences, etc.

4. Craig: The amount of the stipends comes from the SUNY administration, is not a decision to be made at ESF.
 5. The SUNY Administration establishes just a minimum; SUNY-ESF could have a higher stipend, above the minimum, as other SUNY schools do.
 6. Stacey: It would be good to follow up with that Survey to be sure what was the addressed group
 7. Daniela: Going back to the funding issue, it's not only about stipends, this largely affects the quality of public education, impacting the access to software licenses, ability to hire faculty, TAs, and so on.
 8. Craig: In the topic of stipends, if the minimum was raised, less students could be employed.
 9. Daniela: This is not about how many students are you going to fund or how well, is more about facing the cuts issues, and do not allow for this cuts to happen anymore.
- o Potential impact of the letter and other ways to provide feedback (Survey)
 1. Chris: In the matter of the Presidential Search, results of the Survey can have a larger impact than the letter we will send. Everyone shall fill at least one survey if you want to leave comments that will be taken into consideration. The Board of Trustees retrieves not only the statistics, but also prints out and reads all the comments one by one. Filling the Survey is something that we could promote among grads when sending them a notification about the letter.
 2. Eugene: It's seems like students are reluctant to respond these surveys. In the spring semester, the board asked for inputs from the student body; students as individuals did not respond before, mostly Faculty members responded.
 3. Rigo: Everyone should try to make time to, at least, look into the candidates' background to answer the Survey, if you cannot attend the meetings.
 4. Tom: Let's try to promote the Survey among grads, tell your friends.
Chris: do emphasize that all of the comments will be looked into
 5. Natalia: can we have people to go in to support the letter and give weight to it? Craig: have people to sign the letter. Maybe send an e-mail with the details. Allison: Let's have the GSA Senate to sign position and name.

- Major editions to be made (Craig):
 1. Include funding, NGOs, and GSA mission.
 2. People can send additional comments.
- Motion to Approve letter to the Board of Trustees for Presidential Search, including editions to be made: Owen Hunter
- Second: Natalia Cagide
- Unanimously approved

Upcoming events:

- Halloween TG: October 25th
- International Night: November 10th
- Harvest potluck: TBD

Attendance:

GSA Senate

1. Craig Lazzar
2. John Wiley (absent, with a proxy)
3. Natalia Cagide Elmer
4. Tom Taggart
5. Owen Hunter
6. Matt Regan
7. Eileen Leon
8. Allison Oakes
9. Christopher Foelker
10. Eugene Law
11. Melisa Keskin
12. Hope Ansanelli
13. Becky Meissner
14. Stacey Mack
15. Darya Karpenko
16. Liza Legorova
17. Ingrid Brofman
18. Rigoberto Melgar
19. N. Scott Bergey
20. Doug Morrison

Guests

Abigail Larkin (proxy for John Wiley)

Daniela Manushevich (FNRM)

Nate