

# Meeting Summary

Old Business:

1. Call to Order by President Tyler Shields
2. Roll call
   1. Quorum Present (15 senate members)
3. In absence of minutes from previous meeting, none approved.

First Meeting Business:

1. Tyler provided a quick introduction to Robert’s Rules of Order including motions, amendments, voting, and tabling so that business could begin and new members and guests would understand the processes.
2. Accept Bylaws in current form with changes made at the conclusion of academic year
   1. Motion to approve: Caitlin Slife
   2. Second: Dan Tinklepaugh
   3. Vote: Approved unanimously
3. No motion to confirm Doug Morrison as Faculty Advisor because he was unable to attend.
4. Order of Succession of President
   1. Proposed order:
      1. Vice President of Grants and Awards
      2. Vice President of Communications
      3. Vice President of Speakers and Presentations
      4. Vice President of International Activities
      5. Vice President of Social Activities
      6. Vice President of Professional Development
   2. This order was proposed by Tyler Shields based on the GSA experience and willingness of the current Vice Presidents to take the position should circumstance require it.
   3. Motion to Approve: Tyler Coccarelli
   4. Seconded
   5. Vote: Motion passes with one abstention
5. Tyler discussed the various committees that need to be filled by senators
   1. GSA committees: which serve with the various Vice Presidents to fulfill their responsibilities and goals. Tyler created sign-up sheets at the end of the meeting for those interested to provide their contact information.
   2. Academic Governance committees (7 positions): which grant vitally important voting positions to graduate students in committees relating to aspects of life, research, instruction and the community on ESF campus.
   3. University Wide committees (2 positions): Positions available to graduate students are in the Student Health Advisory Council and the Diversity Council – since renamed Inclusion and Equity.
      1. The latter council may not persist in its current form, a past representative Sarita Bassil said. She updated the group on current activity however, which includes listening sessions and ongoing statement and goal drafting.
   4. An email detailing more specific information on the Academic Governance and University Wide committees will be sent by Tyler soon.
6. GSA processes and protocols were explained
   1. The use of proxies by members who cannot attend
   2. How to disseminate information through Tyler using the listserv
   3. Reimbursement procedures as well as cash and check advances for events and activities, because the GSA is unable to have a purchasing card.
7. Officer Reports:
   1. President Tyler Shields:
      1. Aims to be transparent and encourages members to give him feedback.
      2. Goals: Make graduate issues the primary focus again. The events of last year required GSA to divert attention from lingering issues and questions relating to student funding, departmental differences in graduate student treatment or accommodation, and related issues.
   2. Vice President of Social Activities Caitlin Slife
      1. Goals:
         1. Integrate the entire graduate student community through social activities across departments and nationality.
         2. Introduce more non-drinking events.
   3. Vice President of Grants and Awards Jonathan Masih Das
      1. His committee awards research and travel grants in the spring and fall.
      2. Better budget practices by GSA will help this goal so that money is distributed equally between semesters and managed in a way so that more students may benefit from these funds.
   4. Vice President of Professional Development Chellby Kilheffer
      1. Goals: Promote information to students about the expectations of them in defending, the procedures of each department, and to host events which prepare students for their thesis defense.
   5. Vice President of Speakers and Presentations Adam Fix
      1. Goals of using presentations to:
         1. Connect graduates with speakers themselves and the events they take part in encouraging multidiscipline interaction.
         2. Interact with the broader community – both at SU and individuals and professionals in the area.
   6. Vice President of International Activities Yokshitha Bathula (Absent), report given in her stead by Sarita Bassil
      1. In the past year several international movie nights and themed events were held. The committee was active in interacting with other diversity groups – academic and undergrad.
   7. Vice President of Communications Jeff Pu
      1. He is responsible for maintaining the various methods of communication with the greater graduate student community through GSA website and Facebook group
      2. This year he hopes to have a graduate student newsletter to increase communication between departments, students, and to highlight individual students
      3. The group discussed various ways to facilitate communication of events to the graduate student body, including the above newsletter, website calendar, and other ideas.

First Meeting Business:

1. Orientation Week debrief: VP of Social Activities Caitlin Slife
   1. The week was very accurately budgeted
   2. Events were generally very well attended by both new and returning students.
   3. Events included both drinking and non-drinking activities, with some held over from previous years but also some new activities.
   4. Suggestions were given by the group to improve information about events in advertisement.
   5. Upcoming activities:
      1. TGs at the Inn Complete for September and October
         1. A well-received idea for Halloween pumpkin-carving contest
      2. Wine Tour
      3. Various other members suggested ways for department reps to do things for their own communities.
2. Fall Semester GSA meeting time
   1. Tyler will shortly make available a survey to determine a new time to meet.
   2. If meeting attendance continues as high as it was today, a new location may be considered.
3. Strengthening Our Community Task Force update from Helene Rainville
   1. The task force formed in response to dissatisfaction with President Wheeler in the previous year.
   2. A survey was put out to the ESF community near the end of the spring 2016 semester. It was evaluated during the past summer – without enough student (undergrad or grad) input and several other issues according to Helene.
   3. An email will report the results in the coming weeks.
4. Syracuse Graduate Student Organization Representative Helene Rainville
   1. Helene encourages participation by ESF graduates in SU events and use of SU services, because ESF graduates are paying for them.
   2. Sarita Bassil also encouraged committees to go to the SU GSO for funding, which in the past has helped with international activities.
5. GSA Survey: VP of Communications Jeff Pu
   1. The survey will be sent out soon and made available for one week.
   2. The survey contains the normal questions from last year as well as questions to learn about student satisfaction with ESF in more specific areas. This will enable Tyler and other representatives advocating on behalf of graduate students to have information and numbers for further discussions with the administration and other stakeholders.
   3. The survey will also allow students to advise on how the GSA budget is allocated.
6. Adjourn the meeting
   1. Motion
   2. Seconded
   3. Vote: Motion passes unanimously

**Attendance**

*GSA Senate*

1. Tyler Shields President
2. Caitlin Slife Vice President of Social Activities
3. Jonathan Masih Das Vice President of Grants and Awards
4. Chellby Kilheffer Vice President of Professional Development
5. Adam Fix  Vice President of Speakers and Presentations
6. Jeff Pu Vice President of Communications
7. Taylor Patterson Secretary
8. Wendy Burgess Treasurer
9. Helene Rainville SU GSO Representative
10. Sarita Bassil FNRM Representative
11. Hajar Faal EFB Representative
12. Tyler Coccarelli Chemistry Representative
13. Dan Tinklepaugh Environmental Science Representative
14. Casey Chamberlain Environmental Studies Representative
15. Blake Neumann Environmental Science Representative

*Guests*

Many, though their names were not recorded at this meeting.