

# GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL **UIC** UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

## GENERAL BODY MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009

### **Zoe Hanson-Hoepfner (GSC President):** Welcome & Announcement

- Anushka Anand is the student representative for UIC on the search committee for the President of the University of Illinois.

### **Anushka Anand (GSC Secretary)**

- If you or your constituents have particular concerns, issues, positions you'd like addressed by the ideal candidate, email me: [aanand2@lac.uic.edu](mailto:aanand2@lac.uic.edu)
- The committee will be holding open forums at each of the 3 campuses – one day, few hours where students, faculty, staff and the community can come and voice their opinions on the qualities, experience they think the ideal candidate should have. It will be in the first week of December. You will be informed of details.

### **DJ Wells, co-chair, Chancellor Committee on the Status of Blacks**

Email: [djwells@uic.edu](mailto:djwells@uic.edu)

- He's been @ UIC for 3 ½ years.
- Functions CCSB:
  - o Advocacy – ensure that black students, faculty members have comfortable community. Retention issues for students and faculty. Issues that impact people of color on campus – ex: admissions problems created new policies that they were involved in. Research and planning committee – a subcommittee always looking at numbers of enrollment and such.
  - o Programming – programs dealing with issues important to people of color. Events: black history makers on campus. And they support events student orgs bring to them – co-sponsor Black and Latino Dialog Forum every year.
  - o Professional student development – initiator of the minority faculty mentoring program. Active Civil service subcommittee – reaches out to those employees on campus.
  - o Social – CCSB monthly meetings are mini-socials and they support other events.
  - o Collaborations – Ex: Black and Latino event. Collaborations with outside groups especially related to higher education groups and supportive of student orgs like National Dental Students Org.
- Looking for collaborations – specifically with student orgs. Have an active student subcommittee to advocate student concerns.

**Stephen Davis (Anthropology):** We are concerned that the proportion of African American students is falling or not rising as before. Is that true and what can we do?

**DJW:** Raw #s not shifted. Given increase in student population the % is decreasing. When opportunity presents we advocate that concern. Our #s are around 8% for black student admissions.

**William Walden (Special Assistant to Provost for Diversity):** Absolute #s as % of total student population is declining.

If we look at the # of African American students enrolled – fairly constant – 11%. It points to the question of retention. There are programs to help retention.

Questions of recruitment, admissions retention are being looked into.

**Member:** As graduate assistants teaching students: What resources do we have to help promote retention especially with African American males in classes?

**DJW:** The studies show that the more plugged in the student is the more likely to be retained. There are now some initiatives to target black males to engage them so they are connected – with administrators – so they can get help or advocacy.

**Eduardo Bustamante (Kinesiology):** Do you have #s for grad. students and faculty present?

**DJW:** don't have them now.

**Juan:** With the survey from student DSTP we will get some data now. Student voices being heard. Will write up a white paper soon.

### **Francesca Gaiba, co-chair, Chancellor Committee on the Status of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT) Issues**

**Email:** [gaiba@uic.edu](mailto:gaiba@uic.edu)

- Members: students staff and faculty
- Many subcommittees
- Lavender Research forum – put together every year. Foster LGBT scholarship @ UIC. Faculty and grad student presentations.
- We apply for grants for funding research that they can fund other student research on campus.
- Housing – LGBT can choose floor now. Working for specific concerns – single rooms, gender-neutral bathrooms.
- Transgender issues – born and assigned to a role but during course of life that didn't role reflect the way they lived. Issue: M/F bathrooms pose issue for transitioning people. Gender-neutral bathrooms – 1 will be in BSB. Safe place for people who don't look/feel like M/F.
- Preferred name: for transitioning people who maybe legally named John but identifies as Jane would be ousted in name call with "John".
- UIC partnership benefits – same-sex partners can cover partners with medical benefits. People aren't aware of it. HR people don't know even though laws are in place.
- Curriculum and learning – advocate more diverse books in library and addressing diversity in curriculum. Think about the things you are teaching – inclusive texts/ideas.

**Liz Thomson, Interim Director, Gender and Sexuality Center**

(<http://www.uic.edu/depts/quic/gsc/>)

Email: [lthomson@uic.edu](mailto:lthomson@uic.edu)

- We would love to know how to service grad students.
- Campus care benefits – last year 1<sup>st</sup> time you could enroll your domestic partner. Not enough people know about this.
- We would love your feedback, comments, concerns – we are searching for permanent Director for Gender and Sexuality Center
- Lavender graduation – for any LGBTQ identified persons. Love to have more graduate students. Few weeks before UIC graduation and they are looking for how to honor grad students – lavender tassels.

**Alberto Tretti (Computer Science):** Any #s on enrollment?

**FG:** No real #s. Famous 10% but wildly speculative. Lots of people don't identify themselves. We are working to get forms you fill @ UIC changed so you can state M/F or Other.

**Marsha Cassidy, co-chair, Chancellor Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities**

Email: [mcassidy@uic.edu](mailto:mcassidy@uic.edu)

- Goals of committee:
  - o Raise awareness + change attitudes: disability is more than just physical issue. Could be mental or invisible disabilities.
    - I will go so far as to say disability is a normal variant of human condition
    - UIC has really the only PhD in Disability Studies in the country. We want to talk up this program and recruit.
    - For awareness we hosted a Movie night – “Murderball” last year about wheel-chair rugby.
    - How could you add things on disability in your classroom study?
  - o Want UIC campus to be welcoming to everyone. No barriers.
    - Impairment (being deaf) vs. disability (living in the world as a deaf person in a hearing world).
    - Accommodation (add facilities like ramps) vs. universal design (lets make design equal and not separate for people with disability)
    - Access to a textbook for vision impaired, lecture for hearing impaired, keyboard for motor-skills impaired.
    - Recruitment of students – its important for housing to be accommodating.
  - o Conduct a survey on campus climate.
- What can we as graduate students do? – Make a statement in your syllabus – where the Disability Resource Center ([http://www.uic.edu/depts/oaad/disability\\_resources/index.html](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oaad/disability_resources/index.html)) is.

**Rebecca Gordon, Director of the Office of Women's Affairs (OWA), Chancellor Committee on the Status of Women.**

(<http://www.uic.edu/depts/owa/>)

Email: [rebeccag@uic.edu](mailto:rebeccag@uic.edu)

- OWA will be renamed to the Women's Leadership Center
- She's also the Campus Advocacy Network Director.  
(<http://www.uic.edu/depts/owa/advocacy.html>)
- OWA was born in 1991 – we were one of 23 demands of student protests.
- Current issues:
  - o Working on diversity issues – collaborating with the DSTP committee
  - o Cuts in budgets – dealing with them. CAN has been drastically affected
  - o Admissions process – involved in diversity discussion
  - o Safety issues – bathrooms in remote areas.
  - o Student committee – argued for family leave policy, advocated for lactation rooms.
  - o TAs – if you see behavior that you don't know how to deal with, essay content that is upsetting, violent behavior -- CAN can help. CAN is a resource you can send students for help for abuse, assault, etc.

**William Walden, Special Assistant to the Provost for Diversity** [report from the Diversity Strategic Thinking and Planning Committee (DSTP)]

([http://www.uic.edu/depts/oaadiversity\\_planning/](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oaadiversity_planning/))

Email: [wwalden@uic.edu](mailto:wwalden@uic.edu)

- Thinking: Understand what diversity means @ UIC
- The process (began 2 ½ years ago)
- Campus DSTP Committee – 27 members from across campus – has 6 subcommittees. – Colleges were encouraged to get thinking on diversity as well.
- Done with thinking phase of diversity philosophies, issues, etc.
- Planning stage now.
- How would it affect you – benefits? -- diverse classrooms.
- One of the goals: Make ongoing initiatives that support diversity across campus more effective.
- Other goal: Institutional transformation
- Student advisory subcommittee mentioned that it's everybody's responsibility to encourage diversity.
- The document on diversity thinking will be released to campus as a draft in early spring.

**Deana Lewis (VP of GSC):** It was mentioned that 11% undergrads enrolled are African Americans. Can you speak more of grad students for enrollment, retention – what resources are available for retention issues there?

**WW:** I can't remember grad student #s. UIC is nationally # 3 in nation for diversity in grad school. Areas we need improvement – STEM discipline – are areas that nationally have problems with diversity. We need to get US citizens into STEM and particularly under-represented minorities.

- There are funding sources like the Abraham Lincoln fellowships – diversity in graduate programs at the Graduate College level along with other Illinois state funds.
- This is an area I think is important – we train grad students to replace us (teachers) – they have to have opportunities to help them.
- The transition from grad student to faculty – how are we intentional in post doc training and getting them instructor positions?

**John Russell (Chemistry):** What is the time frame is for this DSTP process? How can grad students who are here for 5 years make an immediate impact on undergrads now?

**WW:** Planning phase of DSTP starts and ends in spring semester.

As TAs you engage them by talking about your research – you can engage them in getting research exposure – directly impact on a smaller scale.

**\*\* Council Business \*\***

**Student Fee Advisory Committee - Deana Lewis (VP of GSC)**

- UPASS hike – exact amount known in Feb.

**Graduate Appointment Review Committee - Deana Lewis (VP of GSC)**

- Committee to address the problems that resulted in lots of unpaid GAs/TAs at the start of this Fall.
- They will be writing a report to Chancellor in Dec.
- Issue with software (Banner, HR FrontEnd) not talking with each other and people not communicating as well.
- Issue with I-9 processing of new international students – this was the first time the hiring units had to handle that as the Office of International Services used to do so before.
- Students' lack of training/knowledge in getting records released from prev. hiring unit so that current position could be processed smoothly.

**Events Committee - Deana Lewis (VP of GSC)**

- ThThTh – 5-7pm on 11/19.
- Basketball 6pm – 11/23. Firepit. Email Zoe for tickets
- Dec 4<sup>th</sup> – end of semester SHEBANG!! Mark your calendars!

**Library/IT Committee - Julie Fountain (History)**

- There's a whole list of new services/improvements the Library and IT depts. Have done with the fee hike
- The new Library Commons initiative
- New printers/photocopiers
- New teaching technologies in classrooms
- ACCC expanded wireless over whole campus. In all classrooms. (UH wireless still being worked on.)

**UIC Senate - Holden Brown (Neuroscience)**

- UIC faculty supports new admissions policies
- MAP funding continued but state doesn't know where \$ will come from
- There might be significant decrease in state funding next year since there'd be no more stimulus \$ as there was this year.

**Diversity Committee – Dayna Chatman, (Communication)**

- Planning an event in Spring – provides incoming grad students (those who applied) with information about grad student life – particularly geared towards diversity.

**Review Project Award Applicants for Fall Semester, vote on awards**

**Stephen Davis (Anthropology):** International film lunchtime series for 5 weeks in the spring. The money goes towards food and some movie rentals.

**Zoe (President of GSC):** What about money for promotion materials?

**SD:** Email of course. Also we would print posters and put them everywhere.

**Alberto Tretti (Computer Science):** How many people can the room hold and how many are you expecting?

**SD:** The room holds about 50 and we are expecting about 30 people.

**Christine Robinson (Math, Statistics and CS):** Lunchtime is hard for TAs teaching classes around that time. Could that be changed?

**SD:** There is never a perfect time when everyone could attend so we chose this as it might bring in people.

**GSC Body votes:** unanimous agreement to fund the Project.

**Review motion to discuss 2<sup>nd</sup> author eligibility for travel award**

**Zoe:** We need to vote on whether we should use GSC travel award funds to fund students who are 2<sup>nd</sup> authors on papers. We would have no way of policing students using the money to fund a trip where they sightsee instead of attending the conference.

**Member:** At some level we'd need to assume the grad students would be ethical.

**Zoe:** The GSC always uses allotted \$ for travel awards. We usually have \$ for 240 travel awards and fund around 225.

**Eduardo Bustamante (Kinesiology):** So we would fund people to go to a conference even if they are not presenting?

**Zoe:** Yes you can go attend conference – GSC didn't fund that before, now should they?

**Stephen Davis (Anthropology):** what about 2 people presenting a paper so one may be a 2<sup>nd</sup> author?

**Zoe:** Right now we'd stipulate that you prove that you are presenting.

**Nick Ardinger (Policy Studies in Urban Education):** We thought the issue was about 2<sup>nd</sup> author unable to get GSC award.

**Zoe:** No they can if they can prove they are presenting.

**Nick Ardinger:** Then I'd suggest amending the wording on the website about the GSC travel award to just say "presenting author" – not 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> author

**Eduardo Bustamante:** What is "presenting"? Are students who stand by posters "presenting"?

**Dayna Chatman (Communication):** Yes. The issue was when sometimes 2<sup>nd</sup> author presents because the 1<sup>st</sup> author is the professor but he/she sends the student to present.

**Zoe:** So first thing next meeting we will propose the amendment of wording in our GSC travel awards to “presenting author” and vote on it.

*For more information about the GSC:*

*Website:* [http://www2.uic.edu/stud\\_orgs/gsc/](http://www2.uic.edu/stud_orgs/gsc/)

*Email:* [gsc-officers@uic.edu](mailto:gsc-officers@uic.edu)

*Phone:* (312) 355-5102

*Fax:* (312) 355-5101

SPRING 2010 GENERAL BODY MEETINGS

January 19<sup>th</sup>

February 16<sup>th</sup>

March 16<sup>th</sup>

April 20<sup>th</sup>