

MINUTES

GSC General Body Meeting
October 14, 2008

I. Attendance and Review of Minutes

Meeting start 5:40pm. Irene opens meeting inviting questions/comments/errors about minutes from Meeting #1. No one has any issues with them so they will stay as is.

II. Office of Sustainability sustainability@uic.edu

Monica Rausa Williams
Chancellor's Committee on Sustainability and Energy (CCSE), Co-Chair (monique@uic.edu)

Brief Background: Last year a task force was established by the Chancellor to evaluate UIC campus sustainability issues, and convened from April – Dec. The final report assembled by this task force was given to the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor, and is available online. Monica also listed some key initiatives (http://www.uic.edu/sustainability/campus_initiatives.html) and committees (<http://www.uic.edu/sustainability/about/ccse.html>) that have been established, and mentioned reinvigoration of some existing ones such as UICycle (<http://fmweb.fm.uic.edu/UICycle/>). The next CCSE meeting is this Thursday at 11:30am-12:30pm, 601 S Morgan St, Chicago IL (2850 University Hall). The UIC IESP (<http://www.uic.edu/depts/ovcr/iesp/>) is also holding a town hall meeting on Nov. 6. Please see http://www.uic.edu/sustainability/news_events/events.html for all meetings and events.

Q: is recycling thru UIC or City of Chicago?

A: Some is in-house, some separate from the campus.

Q: How can we check which buildings recycle?

A: Website for UICycle.

Q: Are there audits to follow up on separation of recycled materials and effectiveness?

A: Yes.

Zoe announces that one of the GSC subcommittees is for sustainability.

III. GEO (Graduate Employees' Organization)

www.uic-geo.net

uic_geo@riseup.net

Heidi Lawson, GEO Co-President

GEO is a Union that represents all the GA's and TA's for collective bargaining. Everyone else can become associate members, but are not official members of the bargaining unit. Different pamphlets from GEO are available for each type of member, and once you fill out a membership sign up card (pamphlets and cards were distributed at meeting) it's good for life membership.

Going on now: 3 big projects

1. Steward's council: GEO's way of staying connected with departments. If interested, come join. If there are no stewards in your department, hard to communicate. Essentially, like GSC reps for GEO.
2. Contract Bargaining: The first 3 year contract is about to end, need to start bargaining for the next one. Need everyone's support to maximize bargaining power. Example of bargaining success: 3% raise for members of the bargaining unit, 1.5% raise for those outside of bargaining unit. Some possible topics to consider in bargaining: childcare, etc.
3. Tuition differentials: 1. Tuition is set, everyone pays it, it's a set amount. 2. Additional fees have oversight and must be approved. 3. Differentials are a 3rd layer of charges used when individual departments need more money. There is almost no oversight for this, it is dependant on your department, and is not covered by tuition waivers. Tomorrow there will be a demonstration at 12pm, SSB. Someone's tuition differential is going to be paid in change. Students and departments both need more money, so the common goal is to get more money from state.
4. Fair Share. (*the following is from the GEO website*)

Fair Share is a term you might hear when discussing union dues. In many states, labor laws allow unions to collect dues from all the members of their bargaining unit (e.g., all TAs and GAs at UIC, in our case) regardless of whether they choose to become full union

members by signing a membership card or not.

The idea is simple. The union is the collective bargaining agent for all the TAs and GAs on campus, so everyone benefits from the agreement we reach with the university. Additionally, all bargaining unit members can file official grievances against the university over issues of late pay checks, being underpaid, working excessive hours, etc. regardless of whether they sign a union card or not. Because everyone benefits from the union's work equally, Fair Share requires that everyone contributes to the union equally. Fair Share is an integral part of having a strong union—without it, we would always be scrambling to find enough financial support to be an effective collective bargaining agent.

At UIC, the GEO membership dues are 2% of each member's earnings. In 2008-2009, that means that graduate employees earning the minimum stipend as negotiated by the GEO and the University (\$14,000 for a .5 assistantship) pays \$31.11 per month to the union. To put that number in perspective, the GEO has also negotiated fee waivers with the university in the same contract, which in 2008-09 total \$87.22 of savings per month. That leaves the typical grad employee ahead \$56.11 per month in fees alone, not to mention the yearly salary increases achieved through collective bargaining.

Q: About tomorrow's demonstration. Does admin staff that's going to receive all the nickels and dimes know it's coming?

A: They know. They are supportive.

Q: Doe GEO use picket lines like Teamsters?

A: There is a no strike clause in the current contract. But maybe a year from now GEO will ask for help that members don't cross picket lines. Teamsters is separate from GEO.

IV. Graduate College (grad.uic.edu)

Josh Fennell

GC has 3 main functions:

- 1) Official function: Academic (non-revenue generating) to make sure all paperwork is in order so we can graduate.
- 2) Non-official initiatives: increase sense of community.
- 3) Initiatives (some examples):
Image of Research (works by contest winners posted in campus libraries, recognizes grad student accomplishment, increases grad student visibility)

Project Global Village: idea is that as researchers, we could be giving back to community too. Funded one trip to Kenya, distributed “life straws” (filters 99% of contaminants to make water safe to drink). Looking for more ideas to help communities.

Mentor Award: if you’ve had a great mentor, nominate them!

Nomination period ended Monday, but info is on website.

Grad Student Life Center: Way down the line, still need to work out purpose, site, etc

- 4) Funding from the GC Fellowship Office: tons of funding opportunities, all listed on GC website under “Funding Your Education.” Contact is Lisa J. Knepshield, Fellowship Coordinator (Lisaknep@uic.edu)

Presenter awards: Similar to GSC travel awards. \$100, but will match up to \$100 more if your department contributes, so \$200 max. New form is available on GC website. If you see old form let GC know so they can get rid of it.

Q: Why no GC clothing? Everyone else (medical, undergrad, health professionals, etc) has clothes, why not GC?

A: good question, Josh will find out. Maybe a vendor issue.

Q: Can you get both the GC presenter award and GSC travel award? And is it first come first serve?

A: You can get both. Rules are on website. Amount was reduced because GC budget has not increased, and the GC wanted to give more students awards. One award per student per fiscal year, rolling deadlines.

Q: Is anybody going to coordinate submission process between GC and GSC, etc?

A: GC looking into making it like GSC’s new online form.

- V. UIC Board of Trustees (<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/>)
James Winters, Student Trustee (jwinte2@uic.edu,
www.uictrustee.com)

Initiatives:

- 1) Increase level of service: food, transportation, amount of money from state funding
- 2) The “Other GSC”: Gender Sexuality Center (<http://www.uic.edu/depts/quic/gsc/>) with Initiative to establish and certify “Safe Zone” counselors for LGBTQA students.

Q: \$14000 budget from student fees. How do you plan on using this?

A: half is for external budget, half is for internal (used for initiatives: pay to hire staff for the student trustee, some for travel as student trustee, etc).

The budget will be posted soon at www.uictrustee.com.

Q: You mentioned campaigning. Don't remember seeing anything about a campaign.

A: Unfortunately, the election process is skewed heavily towards the undergrads since they represent most of UIC student body. This needs to change to involve grad students more.

A (Dean Linda Deanna): Grad students can run for this too, not restricted to undergrads, even though it's been an undergrad for the last few years. Only 1 student trustee from each U of I campus, this is determined by the state, not UIC.

Q: Is a date set for Safe Zone training?

A: Not yet, hopefully before November. Anyone interested in participating can contact me directly at jwinte2@uic.edu, or contact Dr. Patrick Finnessy at pkfinn@uic.edu for the next session sponsored by the Gender and Sexuality Center.

VI. Nick Ardinger, assistant manager for campus housing
(ardinger@uic.edu).

Apartment style housing for grad student housing is available. Contact Nick to set up a tour, and get free lunch!

VII. Old Business

Travel awards: Davide

1. New link on website where you can check status. Feedback welcome!
2. Since last meeting, all the acceptance letters sent through the online system are also CC'd to the recipient's GSC reps.

Q: Int'l students in my department haven't gotten award from over a year ago. What should I tell them?

A: First, old budget expired June 1 so funds no longer available for those applications. Only a few borderline apps were rolled over to the current budget. Second, int'l students' main issue is that their awards have to be processed through payroll. If their info with payroll is not up to date, then even if GSC approves the Travel Award, there is nothing further we can do to get them the money. Int'l students must renew their tax forms EVERY SINGLE YEAR. Otherwise they will not be able to get their award.

A (Dean Deanna): The books are closed from last fiscal year. Not likely that payroll will roll over those award funds. Also receipts validity expire after 90 days. So int'l students must fill out tax forms and status forms EVERY YEAR. They should be up to date on this anyways

because this affects much more than just GSC travel awards. Check with Office of International Services (<http://www.ois.uic.edu/>).

Q: What if they just want to know if the GSC ever approved their Travel Award application?

A: They can check if we approved them online at GSC site up to a year ago.

Fall social event: Zoe

Student life committee! Sign up! Help! There's money budgeted for this, it needs to be planned.

VIII. New Business

Project Grants: Irene

Next month is deadline, 1st week of Nov. Get the word out to your students. Application is on the GSC website.

Housing: Nick Ardinger, Assistant Manager for Campus Housing (ardinger@uic.edu). Apartment style Grad student housing is available. See <http://www.housing.uic.edu/grad/> for more info.

SFAC (Student Fee Advisory Committee): Zoe

Voted on 2010 budget recently. This is where our student fees go. Breakdown of fees for past 5 years in packet on table (will be posted on GSC website).

Student fees going up 3.4% next year, this is pretty low considering inflation is 3%. Food & transportation gets most of this. SFAC meetings are open to public (can attend, not speak).

Building assessment: was introduced in 2006 (~\$270). Confusing because if you enrolled at UIC prior to 2006, you would only get grandfathered in later. Each year they grandfather in the previous year's entering class to make it fair. For example, this year they added the fee to the class that entered in 2006. Next year, those who entered UIC in 2005 will also be charged the Building assessment fee.

Q: Technology assessment?

A (Zoe): that is an "assessment" not a "fee." That will be addressed in upcoming SFAC meetings, and GSC will be given updates.

A (Irene): New students pay, old students do not. Biggest issue for grad students was to pay for electronic journal subscriptions. Have \$200K allocated for this. No grandfathering in like with the building fee. "Library and technology assessment fee" is waived for RA, TA, and GA.

American Student Government Association Conference: Irene

GSC + USG + HPSC are jointly sponsoring a conference here at UIC.

Email Irene if you want to register. This org also has great resources on its website. The following is an email from Butch Oxendine, Executive Director of the ASGA.

I'm writing to invite the officers, senators, and advisors of the Graduate College, Health Professions, and the USG to attend The American Student Government Association's "Midwest Student Government Training Conference" on October 25!

Your institution, through the USG, is the conference host! The event will be held on your campus.

Please see www.asgaonline.com/conferences/midwest for details!

Respectfully,

*Butch Oxendine
Executive Director
American Student Government Association*

IX. Committee Meetings

Establish tasks, establish timeline for when to accomplish it.

Big things: fall event, project awards, tuition differential, dissertation workshop.

X. Adjourn 7:40pm

GSC General Body Meetings 5:30 PM SSB B/C

November 11, 2008

February 10, 2009

March 10, 2009

April 14, 2009

GSC Executive Board 2008-2009

Irene Klein, President

Zoe Hanson, Vice President

Ina Han, Secretary

Davide Fossati, Treasurer

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