

Graduate Student Council

GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

DATE: March 7th, 2019 **TIME:** 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

PLACE: Room B&C, Student Services Building
(1200 W Harrison Street, Chicago, IL 60607)

1. Welcome & Dinner
2. Speakers:
 - Himanshu Sharma, Director of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure for Education and Research (ACER)
 - i. Services provided by the ACCC
 1. Google Suite (from email to hangout)
 2. Box, allowing for shared folders with unlimited storage
 3. Lynda is a popular site for short courses on different topics (Linux, coding, programming, etc.)
 4. Qualtrics, survey and analysis tool
 - a. They also provide security, approved by Chief security officer and Lawyers
 5. For more information visit: accu.uic.edu/service/all
 - ii. Advanced cyberinfrastructure for Education and research (ACER) provides a broad-array of world-class cyberinfrastructure resources and services (more information: <https://acer.uic.edu/>):
 1. Computing
 - a. High Performance computing, over 150 cores
 - b. Providing CPUs and GPUs and high memory nodes, seen in RNA sequencing as an example
 2. Data
 - a. Approved and restricted for data protection
 - b. Big data protocols
 - c. R and SAS web application, allowing there to be no bottleneck
 3. Applications
 - a. Multiple scientific applications (150 over), NAMD, Python, R, Python
 4. Networking
 - a. Currently under construction for moving big data across institutions
 5. Innovation
 - a. They're working on machine learning and advance work

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- iii. Students are encouraged to contact acer@uic.edu to find out the best method to access our resources and/or setup consultations.
 - 1. Services are provided through funding from professors and research groups
- iv. There are open positions for a Computational Specialist, which if Full Time will get Tuition Waiver (more info: <https://jobs.uic.edu/job-board/job-details?jobID=111020>)
- v. Other positions will also soon be available, including Project Manager, Research Database Admin and Informatics Systems Administrator.
- vi. Speaker can be reached through, himanshu@uic.edu
- vii. Question: Is the R through the nodes available?
 - 1. It is, along with multiple versions, yet there is fee for use.
- viii. Question: Is there a service or method for students, who are not able to afford these programs?
 - 1. There isn't a model for students to come for funds, the system depends on Researchers with active funding.
- ix. Question: Could you elaborate as to how this NSF funding?
 - 1. Over 1.1 million dollars have been awarded for this group.
- x. Question: "Extreme" is an old super computer machine, are there any plans for an update?
 - 1. Although it was the first super computer purchased, there are no plans to update it, but there are plans to search for more funding and obtain new machinery.
- J. Rex Tolliver, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
 - i. He states that his position is the chief student advocate for students across all departments
 - ii. The Student Affairs's Strategic priorities
 - 1. Student-centered culture
 - a. Speaker states that they have been working to address Mental Health Crisis with the start of the Mental Health Task Force
 - i. The Task Force came back with over 30 Recommendations to improve the campus
 - ii. Looking for more staff for the Health center
 - iii. Rolling things out by Fall
 - b. Food Insecurity Initiative
 - i. UIC Pantry services will improve
 - ii. "Feed the Flames pantry" app initiative - Program for students to get alerts for leftover food from meetings.

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- c. Housing insecurities
 - i. Trying to take existing housing stock and to make them available for students at a short-term basis
 - ii. Especially for Students during Finals, allowing students to stay close to camps
 - 2. Organizational Effectiveness and Innovation
 - a. Raising the minimum student wage, to try and match the States rates or incrementally, over time
 - b. Student engagement area
 - i. Looking for new Vice Chancellor for Student engagement to improve area on campus.
 - 3. Enterprising Strength and Resources
 - a. Opening new Starbucks in the building by Harrison, and UIC has bought Starbucks franchise license for students to run and administer the Starbucks for students' benefits
 - b. New Building "ARC" (Academic & Residential Complex)
 - i. Housing, classrooms, and lounges
 - ii. Different from classrooms in campus
 - c. New Spaces, expanding Student Center East, bringing the different essential student services closer together.
Specifically, they aim to improve/relocate:
 - i. Pier Room
 - ii. Restrooms
 - iii. East Terrace
 - iv. ID center
 - v. SCE Inner circle, remodeled, increasing functionality and spacing, lighting
 - vi. Converting abandoned racquetball space into space for student meetings by the Fall
 - d. Student Center West
 - i. Renovating meeting rooms
 - ii. Establishing a Graduate and Professional Student Center, by early Fall
- iii. Questions:
 - 1. Question: How much did the Starbucks license cost?
 - a. Starbucks license cost 10-20K
 - b. Proprietary equipment and materials cost 200-300K
 - 2. Question: What are the exact plans on expanding Counseling Center services? Increasing the number of professionals? Are you

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going to increase numbers of staff, or expand services, removing the term limits for grad students?

- a. They're working on expanding multiple services for students for students and adapting stronger tele-services to supplement growth.
3. Question: Should we expect increase in fees as a result?
 - a. For the upcoming Fall, there will be an increase of \$50, similar to what we see in ACCC, student aux, and others that don't receive state funding, as these receive an increase in fees "in turns", periodically over rotation with these other services.
4. Question: Are we receiving fee increase notifications?
 - a. This is not controlled by student affairs office.
5. Question: Will there be a system for us to notify where the fee funds will be going towards?
 - a. The funds will go directly towards proposed changes and projects.
 - b. The values are posted at the Student Center East.
6. Question: Is there data on how many people use the services provided?
 - a. The data is generated, but not presented
 - b. Comment: Concern that there's no clarity for us to see where the fees are going towards,
 - i. Speaker suggests that they are cognizant of the amount of fee increases. However, the plan adopted is providing less than what the students are looking for in terms of services provided. And so, he's balancing the cost and requested services.
7. Question: What's the speaker's involvement between GEO and UIC?
 - a. None, he only gets briefings from the university about what has been discussed.
 - b. He only conveys what students want, but not participate in these discussions.
8. Question/Comment: At the library of health sciences, its hard to find food security in the library, for example, and services even for coffee is hard to find?
 - a. Speaker agrees, that services seemingly aren't designed for students. He states that he will communicate with people in charge.

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9. Question: Any other projects for West Campus?
 - a. Most plans consist of setting up/improving housing, which is mainly planned for Phase 3
10. Question: General fee will increase by \$100 by next year plus there will be significant Health fee increase. Will there be any adjustments towards wages?
 - a. Campus care is driven by student demands,
 - i. Students are getting all services provided, which can allow for 7 figure services which increase the amount required to pay for such services. So, the question becomes, do you cut the service for the same price, or adjust accordingly?
 - b. So, there's a problem with Public Higher Education, as State support has decreased
- iv. For further contact: jrex@uic.edu
- o Mitchell Connolly, Graduate Student Senator serving Executive Committee
 - i. UIC Senate Elections will be held on April 9th
 - ii. Senate is a meaningful way of serving the University
 - iii. Function: Governing body of the university, legislating and acting on issues to serve the institution
 - iv. One can serve in a number of committees to serve the senate
 - v. Committees
 1. Executive committee, all through plans go through them
 - a. Two graduate student seats will be open
 2. Others, with limited number of student seats
 - vi. Senate meetings happen once a month, there's additional meetings for each committee
 - vii. They observe, and vote on initiatives, and proposals
 - viii. Initiatives:
 1. New idea was an act to improve campus safety
 2. Proposed to investigate the scope of mental health crisis at UIC
 3. Extensive discussions on the Discovery Partners Institute, which wants to increase the number of community advisory committee
 4. John Marshall School merger, discussions on their new curriculum and how it affects the Senate
 5. Discussions on any educational policies
 6. GEO discussions on Negotiations, the Speaker is the advisor for the Chancellor
 - ix. To get involved
 1. The GSC has ten seats available for the Student Senate

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- x. Join the senate representation! If interested, please contact Anna Terebus at atereb2@uic.edu.
- xi. Questions:
 1. What is the time commitment?
 - a. It depends on the senate committee you're interested in joining. The speaker was a part of the executive committee and that required a lot of time and responsibilities.
 2. How is the senate a governing body?
 - a. The senate is responsible for a lot of tasks such as changing legislation, voting on proposals, evaluating statutes, etc.
 3. What's the process of nominating a student?
 - a. Filling out a student petition, asking what committees you're interested in joining.
 - b. GSC provides a list of potential members that could serve.
- o Jeff Schuhrke, Co-President of Graduate Employees Organization
 - i. GEO is the union that represents GA and TA, which doesn't include RA cause of state law
 - ii. GEO is an independent body of UIC, a legally recognized union.
 1. Contracts are followed by UIC, for GA and TA
 - iii. Negotiations have taken place since March 1st, 2018.
 - iv. Last bargaining session needed a federal mediator.
 - v. Bargaining sessions are open to all students.
 - vi. Major issues with Contract negotiations:
 1. Fee Waivers
 - a. There are a lot of fees waived, but GEO aims to increase the amount of fees waived.
 - b. International Student Fees, increased to \$130 per semester with no reason,
 - i. Supposedly, funding goes into the International student office
 - c. Fee negotiation
 - i. 40% of campus care fees are waived in the current contract. GEO is requesting to increase the waiver.
 2. Transparent appointment policies
 - a. Many departments do not guarantee a TA or GA position.
 - b. Students are under the expectation of receiving TA-ship but then get let go for no clear reason.
 - c. No criteria considered or any reason behind why something occurs.
 3. Living wages

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- a. Recent contracts:
 - i. Min. Wage: \$16,065 in 2015
 - ii. During 2015-2016, no settled contract so the wage increased was paid back retroactively
 - iii. Speaker presents that budgets for UIC are not in a bad state, so there's increase in possibility, at least comparable for previous years
 - b. The university is offering a 4-year contract, with average annual rate increase of \$300, but this new contract is not getting retroactive increase, as seen in previous years.
 - i. Administration mentions that finance is tough but its not presented at the bargaining table
 - c. University of Chicago make from \$28-32K a year for the same work, although this is a private University, the speaker states that is not a livable wage.
 - d. Since Dec 10, the University response has been not to present a return proposal, as per custom during bargaining sessions.
 - e. They had a Work-in at the University Hall, where TA and GA would work in one central location to raise awareness. However, there wasn't really a response
 - f. Faculty Union also in contract negotiations
 - g. Informational picket was also organized, yet still no response
 - h. Strike Authorization Vote occurred and passed.
 - i. No counter-proposal by the Uni even though there were two bargaining meetings
 - i. March 19th, will be the strike date
 - i. However, GEO is still willing to participate during Bargaining sessions.
 - j. General Membership Meeting at Gallery 400
- vii. Questions:
1. Are RA's capable of helping GEO?
 - a. GEO membership is open, but legally you cannot holdup your work as an RA. RA can volunteer and get help, although not covered legally
 2. Is there anything to help as tuition waivers get taxed, decreasing wages?

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- a. GEOs have proposed to allow students to waiver that from tax, but the speaker states that the school's response is they cannot offer information from the IRS.
3. Project Award:
- o "Converging Narratives", Graduate Student Conference - Adrian Chubb
 - i. Graduate student conference, covered by the Literatures, Cultural Studies and linguistics, which bring in all the languages and cultural studies
 - ii. It's the third annual conference. This year the event will be held April 5-6, 2019
 - iii. It will help Grad Students by offering an opportunity to gain experience of being at a conference, networking and presenting your research.
 1. There will be 11 Graduate Student speakers
 - iv. Keynote speaker, Elizabeth Ladenson – on Censorship of the Arts
 - v. 4 Panels for Grad Students
 1. Voices Raised
 2. Voices Written
 3. Voices Denied
 4. Voices Given
 - vi. Conference budget: \$3,500
 1. Majority goes into catering
 2. Funding already received from different departments.
 - vii. Funding requested \$500
 - viii. Publicizing on both campuses
 - ix. Question:
 1. What's the expected seating?
 - a. From 40-80 students
 2. What is the purpose of the requested funds?
 - a. GSC funds for catering.
 3. Are these grad student research presentations?
 - a. Yes, there are three 20 min presentations on their research
 4. Where will the event take place?
 - a. East Campus, Room 404, Institute of the Humanities, and University Halls
 - x. Vote says they will be awarded!
4. Updates from the GSC Officers:
- o Anna Terebus, upcoming GSC election
 - i. Election constitution rules:
 1. All active GSC representatives and Executive Committee members may vote in the elections.

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2. Nominations for GSC officers must be cast before the meeting of the election.
 3. Voting shall be by anonymous written ballot and tabulated by objective third party tellers selected prior to the election to determine the elected GSC officers.
 4. The candidates will be elected by GSC representatives and executive committee members who are present at the voting meeting.
 5. The candidate will be elected by a majority of votes.
 6. Should there be a tie in an election, the nominees will be prompted with an additional question and will be put to a re-vote.
 7. Should there be more than two candidates for a position, the top two candidates determined by the initial vote will automatically go into a run-off for the final decision. The run-off will follow the tie procedure: the nominees will be prompted with an additional question and will be put to a re-vote.
- ii. Election date: April 4th
 - iii. Deadline to submit the nomination April 3rd, 11.59PM.
 - iv. E-mail Anna Terebus atereb2@uic.edu and Pratik Deshpande pdeshp6@uic.edu with the nominations
 - v. Four Officer Positions:
 1. President
 2. Vice-President
 3. Treasurer
 4. Secretary
- Pratik-Sanjeev Deshpande, upcoming events
 - i. GSC at UIC Facebook page
 - ii. Meditation
5. Representatives Sign In & Adjournment of the General GSC meeting

[GSC Facebook Page](#)

[GSC Website](#)

Email: GSC-OFFICERS@listserv.uic.edu