

Graduate Student Council

GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL MEETING Minutes

DATE: May 2nd, 2019 **TIME:** 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

PLACE: 329, Cardinal Room, Student Center East
(750 S Halsted, Chicago, IL 60607)

1. Welcome & Dinner
2. Speakers:
 - Neal R. McCrillis, Vice Provost for Global Engagement
 - Speaker suggests the new United Airlines Scholarship – given 80 awards in the past year – supporting international research by awarding a travel voucher.
 - One new event to campus this upcoming year: Induction ceremony for international students, to recognize where they come from, and what they'll contribute
 - They started workshop to help faculty to teach them for certain scenarios. The students go through cultural difficulties. This will be continued for the upcoming. Helping faculty improve and engage with international students
 - Traveling internationally for UIC, students should enroll in the international safety website, along with insurance coverage.
 - Question from Representative: what's your opinion on the International Student Fee as the university is collecting from incoming students?
 1. Speaker's response: He states that he's not denying that the fee has increased. The university made that decision 5 years ago, with the previous administration.
 - Question from Representative: What will be your action in response to the proposed fee increase?
 1. Speaker's response: Cannot replace that revenue unless there is another source of revenue. It's a common fee in most universities. However, the speaker clarifies it's not what he would want for international students.
 - Question from Representative: As an international student, can your center help with accelerating with Visa paperwork to travel from US to other countries for academic purpose?
 1. Speaker's response: The office has good relations with consulates to help with particular cases,
 - a. When individuals apply, the office can provide further information.
 - b. You can contact the speaker directly for information and assistance, nealrm@uic.edu

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- Question from Representative: Office of International Students, they don't really help with Green Cards or H1Bs, will be there expansion for this office to support that work?
 - a. The office does help with this, but the service is mainly geared for faculty.
 - b. For students the expense would be hard to handle the greater amount of cases.
 - c. The offices does help with OPT, for around 1000 students
- Question: People want to get Visas? How will their office help?
 - a. They can't really establish enough resources for these services
 - b. The office wants to focus on the Student – Visas and faculty experiences.
- Suggestion presented to speaker: Have staff that can help students get guidance for particular experiences applying to H1B visas and Green Cards, as students don't know as much.
 - a. He thought that info was already provided, but he will take the suggestion to help administrators aware of this gap.
- Q: Does the office help with regulation/immigration issues for students that want to establish a new company?
 1. The speaker states that he is unaware of any workshops or activities.
 - a. Fellow representative mentions that there is workshop available that can be really help.
- Nicholas D. Robledo, UIC Student Senator; Pal Shah, Roosevelt Institute; Anthony Wingfield, student senator
 - Counseling center has been struggling to keep up with increasing demand.
 - They've received limited increase in funding.
 - They state that for every counselor they're handling over 1900 students.
 - Other institutions are addressing these problems.
 - With their proposal, they would increase the number of counselors and increase the amount of resources available to them. Citing from their resolution:
 1. We propose UIC introduce a \$10 UIC Mental Health Student Fee per academic semester. The student fee would be earmarked exclusively for the UIC Counseling Center and would provide roughly \$633,600 for the academic year based on current enrollment numbers.

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- In passing the question to GSC representatives by email, only 14 responses with just 9 supporting the idea [This email was sent by GSC officers Tuesday, April 16th, 2019].
- Both campuses use the counseling centers; however, some have to wait up to 8 weeks for an appointment.
- A wait list of up to 80 students, and about half dropped interest in getting mental health care.
- Two full time faculty positions.
- Anthony Wingfield presented his own personal testimonial, explaining how helpful the counseling center has been through his undergraduate career.
- Question from Representative: Isn't the university getting away with it easy for getting funds from students?
 1. The speakers agree that It shouldn't be a burden taken up by students; However, only 40% of the healthcare fee is given to the counseling center.
 2. They calculate a \$10 fee from previous values and determined it would be manageable with students.
 - a. This proposal was approved by the faculty committee in the senate. The bill isn't set in stone. So, they're trying to see the what will get through a majority of votes. These guys are looking for support from us to design the best resolution.
- Question from Representative: What are other steps to get?
 1. The speakers state that they will be talking to trustees and board of trustees.
- Representative states that if the students pass the proposed fee, the grad students' employees will be covered for any fee that is created during the life of the contract, as per the agreement in the past GEO negotiation.
 1. The speaker states that timing is important as this is why they are pushing for this resolution to avoid getting this delayed any further. And their understanding is that the fee would get covered.
- Question from Representative: Is there a way to lower tuition to then see this fee be covered that way?
 1. They haven't gotten a meeting to discuss these potential ideas with Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Rex Tolliver.
- Question from Representative: What are they looking for grad's help
 1. They wanted to see what our thoughts would be and whether there's support
 2. But next step would be to lobby for supporting this

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- Question from Representative: What would supporting this resolution consist?
 1. They state that they're trying to be flexible, trying to find out the best way to do this.
 - Informational voting took place to determine whether majority of GSC representatives will support this fee increase
 1. 43 students are in favor
 2. 2 students abstained their vote
 - To further contact the speakers:
 1. Nicholas D. Robledo: palshah2@uic.edu
 2. Pal Shah: nroble7@uic.edu
 3. Anthony Wingfield: awing2@uic.edu
3. Farewell Speech and Updates:
- Outgoing Secretary: Juan Maldonado Weng
 - Outgoing Treasurer: Sai-Siva Kare
 - Presented budget breakdown
 1. 68.3% of the budget went towards travel awards, with more than 230 travel awards given out.
 - Question from Representative: What will happen with the remaining budget?
 1. The remaining budget will used to get speakers and promotional items.
 - Question from Representative: Why do people need to attend monthly meetings to be eligible for travel awards?
 1. Travel awards eligibility is based on the GSC constitution.
 - Outgoing Vice-President: Pratik-Sanjeev Deshpande
 - Vice-President organized a slide show with pictures from previous events.
 - Outgoing President: Anna Terebus
 - Thanked the representatives and executive committee members for their work throughout the year.
 - Provided the information on Graduate Students Lounge:
 1. GSC Officers started the initiative opening Graduate Students Lounge.
 2. The lounged should be opened in the SCW next year.
 3. It will be a big spacious place, where graduate students can work and have social gatherings.
4. Group Discussion:
- Discussion with Department Representatives on their feedback and suggestions for the new GSC Officers team.

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- Comment from Rep: It would be helpful to have the meetings with alternating time slots for monthly meetings for students with conflicting schedule.
5. Incoming Officer Speech:
 - Incoming Secretary: Ritesh Jagatramka
 - Incoming Treasurer: Sivaraman Lakshmipathy
 - Incoming Vice-President: Biswajeet Maharathi
 - Incoming President: Sai-Siva Kare
 6. Representatives Sign In & Adjournment of the General GSC meeting

[GSC Facebook Page](#)

[GSC Website](#)

Email: GSC-OFFICERS@listserv.uic.edu