

## **Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)**

**Notes from September 6, 2022 | 7:00 p.m. | In-person & Zoom**

East Campus Union, Great Plains Room B

### **CALL TO ORDER 7:05pm**

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES 7:06pm**

The minutes approved by the majority.

### **OPEN FORUM**

-Joy Eakin: Advertised an NSF funded training opportunity (via Zoom) for graduate students by NU tech ventures. NU tech helps protect intellectual property like patents, etc. Training is useful to students who want to venture into their own businesses or already are entrepreneurs; individuals who want to network with others and learn about business value proposition, testing their ideas, mapping out players in ecosystem, determine target audience, and the impact on stakeholders. Training is open to faculty, staff, and students. Add email and the website here <https://www.nutechventures.org/nebraska-introduction-to-customer-discovery/>

-Jake Drake: Introduction and position at ASUN as the student body president. Extended support for graduate students and GSA. Aims to learn more about graduate student issues and bridge the gap between student government and graduate students. Thanked reps for their service!

### **President Donesky ([gsa@unl.edu](mailto:gsa@unl.edu))**

-thanked reps for their service, gave information about assembly meetings and website, mentioned that he will send calendar invites and that meetings are open to public

-explained the student government and GSA's role & function

-described responsibilities of representatives; it is their job to connect GSA to students and vice versa; bylaws require them to meet with graduate chair of their departments at least once per semester; representatives can claim 1 unexcused and 2 excused (with 24hr notice in advance) absences during their term

-encouraged them to read the welcome packet and bylaws; said that representatives should contact VP representation if their eligibility status changes; mentioned that their term is till next August and they should assist GSA with smooth transition afterwards

-introduced the executive officers and committee chairs

-described GSA's history since 2016 and the aims during the past year; GSA focused on student stipends, health insurance, and family housing case, will continue to make progress; officers spent a lot of time meeting officials and administration which led to progress in voicing student concerns; successfully delegated faculty and staff rates for guest meal prices at university dining centers for graduate students

- a core goal this year will be to build connections, GSA president will meet chancellor each semester to discuss graduate student issues and ask for support
- explained GSA bills, their purpose, process, timeline, and humble recommendations for smooth processing of bills in assembly; executive officers will help representatives with formatting and presenting bills
- how to speak during GSA meetings?\_ flip placard up and/or raise hands, will get opportunity to speak in order
- explained meeting procedure, motions, bills and process of tabling them, and vote casting
- representatives are required to serve at a minimum of one internal or external committee, encouraged representatives to serve on external committees when feasible

**Executive Vice President Jemkur** ([vicepresidentgsa@unl.edu](mailto:vicepresidentgsa@unl.edu))

- welcome & emphasized on serving at internal and external committees

**Vice President of Student Affairs Hafeez** ([vpstudentaffairsgsa@unl.edu](mailto:vpstudentaffairsgsa@unl.edu))

- will send form to know representative preference for serving on internal/external committees;
- representatives are requested to submit responses by September 15<sup>th</sup>; will assign random committees if preferences are not received by the deadline
- Question: can representatives apply for GTA funds  
Answer: yes, unless they serve on internal GTAP committee

**Vice President of Representation Mowat** ([vprepresentationgsa@unl.edu](mailto:vprepresentationgsa@unl.edu))

- responsible for attendance, asked representatives to leave placards at desks for attendance; this year GSA has representatives for 54 out of 67 programs total, plus 2 more at-large members, more spots available for interested students

**Vice President of Finance Alkady** ([vpfinancegsa@unl.edu](mailto:vpfinancegsa@unl.edu))

- showed GSA budget for the year; can advise committee chairs on expenditure
- total of \$30000 budget, GTAP takes about half or more

Graduate Funding	2022-2023			
	Planned	Spent	Allocated	Remaining
Conference travel grants	15,000	3000	7800	4,200
Networking and special events	4,000	1043.08	1000	1,957
Professional development events	3,500		1200	2,300
NAGPS membership, regular	550			550
Printing and advertising	1,500			1,500
Departmental special projects grants	5,000			5,000

Executive conference travel	0			0
Diversity & Inclusion	750			750
<b>Total Budget</b>	30,300	4043.08	10000	16,257

- Allocated budget does not mean it has to be spent, try to go as low as you can wisely
- If you are on a committee and wondering what to spend and how, contact him!

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Academic affairs ([academicaffairsgsa@unl.edu](mailto:academicaffairsgsa@unl.edu))

Chair Heydi Calderon Ambelis

- introduction of committee, contact her about academic conflicts!
  - will follow-up on past year projects, continue to try get Grammarly for free for students; & podcasts for graduate students, people are welcome to join
  - Question: Can you try to get free LinkedIn+ learning platform for graduate students?
- Answer: I will look into it! kindly send email about it and cc pro-dev

### D&I ([diversityinclusiongsa@unl.edu](mailto:diversityinclusiongsa@unl.edu))

Co-chair Amanda Brand

- introduction of committee & current projects
- over summer they worked with education, D&I, graduate studies, and title IX offices, delegated to get better support and services for students
- reach out if you are interested in working with us
- developing a climate survey (expanded from past year) along with grad studies; please fill in responses to let us know what is important for you

### GTAP ([gtap@unl.edu](mailto:gtap@unl.edu))

Chair Kat Jordan at conference

- President Donesky: GTAP has 12 winners for Fall 2022, up to \$7000 will be allocated to students; GTAP has increased amount allocated per person to balance for inflation, will receive new applications soon and need volunteers for reviewing; if you know any faculty who is interested in being a reviewer, kindly connect us as GTAP have trouble finding faculty reviewers

### Pro Dev ([prodev@unl.edu](mailto:prodev@unl.edu), [spgp@unl.edu](mailto:spgp@unl.edu))

Chair Hector Palala Martinez

- President Donesky: intro of committees, chair meets with Lisa Rhode biweekly to discuss professional development opportunities, feel free to give ideas!
- pro-dev runs special project grants which allocates money to students who want to provide professional development opportunities to other students, contact if you are interested in knowing more

### Quality of Life ([qualityoflifegsa@unl.edu](mailto:qualityoflifegsa@unl.edu))

Connor Gee

- focusing on the family housing situation right now
- open to suggestions to improve the quality of grad students' life
- second focus is health insurance, will conduct survey to understand what meets grad students' needs best
- President Donesky: update on health insurance \_ Dr. Hope asked us to know what grad students need and how insurance plans meet their needs, a survey was set as go during last meeting which is an important milestone, this year \$8000 will be spent on surveying all students, if you are on student health insurance kindly help us test the form so we know it is working properly before we send it to all UNL students; we will make sure all 4 campuses are represented, survey will be conducted by a sociological bureau that UNL hired as independent third party to remove bias
- this is a change year in health insurance, this year we will use the same insurance, next year we will have more say in decisions hopefully

Question: when will the test form be sent?

Answer: they target the end of September, but I anticipate the end of semester

-Suggestion: add grad student stipends on list, it is a serious issue particularly after inflation

Answer: will work on it, you can be involved in process by joining internal committees

### Social Events ([socialgsa@unl.edu](mailto:socialgsa@unl.edu))

Chair Kayla Ney

- introduction of committee
- open to diverse perspectives of representatives, let us know suggestions and comments/ concerns
- grad welcome fair event 5:30-7:30pm in city campus union on September 8, good networking and social opportunity, please pass on flyers!
- looking for helpers from GSA, kindly come to event and volunteer based on your time and ease
- tight budget for GSA meetings but I will work on food and let you know ahead of time about arrangements
- last year we discussed using GSA social events budget to give to departmental GSAs to support their events, avenues for combining different departmental GSAs for networking
- president Donesky's goal is to meet all departmental meetings himself or through executives this year

### Communications ([communicationsgsa@unl.edu](mailto:communicationsgsa@unl.edu))-

Co-chair Christa Rahl

- Introduction of committee

### External Committee Reports

- none yet!
- this would be the time in future where representatives share updates about external committee meetings, make reports & ask for suggestions

5-minute recess motion  
motion seconded and passed!

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Introduced candidates for at-large members  
Votes casted and representatives appointed  
- Ahmed Refaei  
- Samyam Shrestha

Motion to get representatives' opinion on things to focus on, seconded and passed

-Vote to determine main goals for the year, we will work on measuring our progress later  
What should we focus on as an assembly striving as a unit? All committees will work on side business!

executive committee voted & narrowed down goals to top 4, will select top 2 from assembly voting

Goals list:

Grad student & advisor relationships

Health insurance

Student fees

Stipends

Question: grad student advisor relationship, how will you take action and investigate matters?

Answer: goal is to work to improve the system and delegate policy changes on institutional level to prevent issues and extend support services

Question: how feasible is it to work on student fees? Can we change things?

Answer: we can advocate but we are not an authority, Alkady will voice concerns and ask questions at CFA

Jake Drake: fees is decided by the board of regents, this is a budget request year and advocacy on fees would look different depending on where you focus your efforts! Your stipends impacted by state legislature, but fee is by university all in all

Question: who regulates stipends?

Answer: diffused model, a minimum is set for departments which regulates tuition remissions, but it is still a recommendation, departments can set stipends higher or lower than minimum limit; university is working on a new budget model, there is uncertainty about how it would change departmental fund allocations and their budget!

Comment: vote on what is important not how much progress we will make, GSA will strive to make best out of it

Voting Results: 45 responses

First: low/unequal stipends

Second: health insurance

President & Vice-President will discuss it with the Chancellor

Internal committees will continue to work on other two goals

**GSA BILL# 1**

By Connor Gee

motion to bring bill to agenda, seconded & passed by majority

Bill formalizes the goals that the assembly voted on as the prime focus of GSA

Voting results: all passed except 1 abstain, passed by majority

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 pm