

# GSG • Assembly Meeting • January 12, 2005

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## Outline and Summary

1. Call to Order and Assembly Business
  1. [Introduction of New Assembly Members - Jack Tinsley](#)
  2. [Approval of the Minutes - Nicole Esparza](#): Minutes from November 10 and December 8, 2004 were approved.
2. Officer Reports
  1. [Chair - Nicole Esparza](#)
  2. [Parliamentary Secretary - Jack Tinsley](#)
  3. [Social Chair - Aleksandar Donev](#)
3. Decision Items
  1. [Funding Request - Jeff Dwoskin](#): Assembly decided to fund ACSS by \$300 and the Butler Committee by \$157.50.
4. Other Reports
  1. [Elections Committee - Sasha Myers](#)
  2. [Academic Affairs - Meredith Safran and James Bickford](#)
  3. [Department Updates - Chemistry, Classics, Molbio](#)
  5. [New Business](#): Amendment to the Constitution was introduced
  6. [Adjournment](#) (Next meeting February 9, 2005 at 6pm in Frist 309)

## Attendance

• **Representatives present** • Aleksandar Donev, proxy for Katherine Bold, ACM • Anita Adhitya, proxy for Neven Fuckar, AOS • Sasha Meyers, CHE • Tyrel McQueen, CHM • Kellam Conover, CLA • Tarje Nissen-Meyer, GEO • Renee Raphael, proxy for Jeris Yruma, HIS • Dan Bouk, proxy for Sultana Banulescu, HOS • Thomas Horine, MAT • Shin-Yi Lin, MOL • Aderemi Artis, PHI • Annika Peter, PHY • Daniel Raburn, PPL •

Barbara Buckinx, POL • Louis Lee, PSY • Levi McLaughlin, REL • Cori Anderson, SLA  
• Nicole Esparza, proxy for Steven Shafer, SOC •

• **Delegates present** • Xuyan Feng, proxy for Chen Wei, ACSS • Leslie Hinkson, Black Graduate Caucus (BGC) • Joshua Friess, BUT • Lior Silberman, GCO •

• **Councilors present** • Chair Nicole Esparza, CPUC, CPUC Executive Committee • Parliamentary Secretary Jack Tinsley, CPUC • Corresponding Secretary Shin-Yi Lin • Treasurer Jeff Dwoskin • Press Secretary Christine Percheski • Social Chair Aleksandar Donev • Lior Silberman, CPUC Rights and Rules Committee • Annika Peter, CPUC • George Reis, CPUC • Guillaume Sabouret, CPUC •

• **Others present** • Lisa Schreyer, Assistant Dean for Residence Life and Student Affairs • Beth McKeown, Community Programs Coordinator • Karen Sigloch, Health & Life Committee •

• **Representatives absent** • Peter Locke, ANT • Sinéad Mac Namara, CEE • Chris DeCoro, COS • Kevin Amonlirdviman, ECO • Christiane Meyer, EEB • Ying Wang, ELE • James Bickford, ENG • Peter Eubanks, FIT • Angela Holzer, GER • Weifeng Cheng, MAE • Daniel Harris, WWS •

• **Delegates absent** • Heather White, Women's Center (WOC) • Weining Man, CIGS • Marcelline Block, Hibben-Magie (HIB) • Carolyn Mordas, LAW • Meredith Safran, OFF •

• **Councilors absent** • James Bickford, CPUC • Newsha Dau, CPUC Priorities Committee • Andrew Moroz, CPUC Resources Committee • Christiane Meyer, CPUC Rights and Rules Committee • Sara Nephew, CPUC Governance Committee • Ian Parrish, CPUC Priorities Committee • Meredith Safran, CPUC, CPUC Executive Committee • Tauna Szymanski, CPUC Judicial Committee •

• **Representative seats vacant** • ARC • ART • AST • COM • EAS • MUS • NES • ORF • SPO •

• **Delegate seats vacant** • Millstone Apartments •

# **Minutes**

## **I. Call to Order and Assembly Business**

The Chair, Nicole Esparza called the meeting to order around 6pm.

### **A. Seating of New Assembly Members - Jack Tinsley**

There were no new Assembly members.

### **B. Approval of Minutes (November 10 and December 8, 2004) - Nicole Esparza**

Ms. Esparza presented the minutes from the November and December meetings, with no proposed amendments. Shin-Yi Lin made a motion to approve the minutes. It was seconded by Christine Percheski. The motion passed.

Ms. Esparza announced that due to a family emergency, the planned guest Paul Breitman could not attend this meeting and will instead attend the next meeting.

## **II. Officer Reports**

### **A. Chair - Nicole Esparza**

Chair: Exec met on a reduced schedule due to holidays, however, several issues were discussed.

1. There were complaints about pedestrian safety on Roper Lane following recent traffic changes---Ms. Percheski is in contact with Public Safety.

- 2.
3. There is a new Public Safety Advisory committee. We need two volunteers---they should e-mail gsg@
- 4.
5. There is a new committee to look at improvements to the gym, initiated by the USG. Karen Sigloch is in charge of volunteers for it.
- 6.
7. The university recently announced that it will reimburse the SEVIS fee for incoming international graduate students.
- 8.
9. We are actively looking for volunteers for the Housing and Parking committees.
- 10.
11. Since Patricia McArdle left the university, the Housing department has had a change of staff and there have been delays with the draw and assignment reform. Aleksandar Donev and Jeff Dwoskin met with Dean Russel and several improvements were discussed, including earlier assignments and two-year leases.

## **B. Parliamentary Secretary - Jack Tinsely**

Jack Tinsley handed out a sheet with a primer on the [GSG organization](#) and then summarized the main points of the handout. The handout explained the organization of the GSG including when elections are held for each position. He then reported that the by-laws taskforce had met and is making progress. They hope to bring the final proposal to Assembly in March or April.

## **C. Social Chair - Aleksandar Donev**

Mr. Donev reported that the GSG will be hosting its Valentine's Day party on February 18th at the Carl Field Center, in Liberation Hall. Following a question by Lior Silberman, he answered that there will be no matching game this year.

### **III. Decision Items**

#### **A. Funding Requests - Jeff Dwoskin**

Treasurer Jeff Dwoskin had sent [his report](#) in advance of the meeting.

There were two funding requests, from ACSS and the Butler Committee. An ACSS representative and a Butler representative presented a brief summary of the events. Mr. Dwoskin made funding recommendations for \$300 and \$157.50 respectively. Mr. Donev made a motion to approve at the amounts recommended and Dan Bouk seconded. The motion passed 15-0-1.

### **IV. Other Reports**

#### **A. Elections Committee - Sasha Myers**

Sasha Myers reported that the Elections Committee had made an [election plan](#), which had been emailed earlier to Assembly. Ms. Myers presented the outline and asked for questions. Hearing no questions, Ms. Esparza made a motion to approve the plan as proposed. Leslie Hinkson seconded the motion. The motion passed 17-0-0. Mr. Silberman asked if there were any nominations received by the committee thus far. Ms. Myers responded in the negative, but said that another email asking for nominations would be made in a few days. The Chair thanked the committee members on their hard work.

#### **B. Academic Affairs - Meredith Safran and James Bickford**

Meredith Safran and James Bickford, the co-chairs of the committee, could not attend the meeting. Therefore, Ms. Lin presented the main points from their report. Ms. Safran and

Mr. Bickford were asked by Dean Redman to organize focus groups regarding Firestone library. Firestone had developed a master plan to reorganized, but has not yet secured funds for their plans. Ms. Lin presented the names of all the grad students involved in the focus groups. The focus groups were designed to include only social science and humanited students since Firestone is their primary library. Firestone administrators have come up with three possible [redesign schemes](#) that are available on the Firestone website. Among the variations presented in the three plans, a few constant themes emerged:

1. better use of space for study, including both group and quiet study, as well as optimized use of natural light (NB in Scheme #2, Floor 3 becomes virtually all study space, where there is most/best natural light, cf changes around the atrium on the lower levels)
- 2.
3. consolidation of general collections (NB in Scheme #2, virtually all general collections are moved to A, B, C levels; cf consolidation of special collections on Floors 1 and C)
- 4.
5. better navigation, especially the creation of sightlines (orange dotted lines on plans) on the lower levels through reorganization
- 6.
7. need for 'service nodes' (symbolized by the whitish ellipses linked by orange dotted lines), areas that could contain any combination of computer/printer, stack guides, plugs/jacks, water fountains, etc
- 8.
9. increased proximity of staff providing services to patrons, including subject-specific librarians
- 10.
11. space for tech services, reserves, and unbound periodicals was reduced
- 12.
13. public space and assigned carrel space was somewhat increased

Following the presentation, several questions and concerns about carrel space and security were made by reps from various humanities departments. Ms. Lin informed Assembly that Ms. Safran and Mr. Bickford are in close collaboration with library

representatives. She encouraged Assembly members to send comments to them at gsgacad@.

Ms. Lin also reported on an APGA humanities alumni networking event. Ms. Safran was contacted by the APGA to recruit students to help organize the event. All humanities GSG representatives and departmental committees have been contacted. Special thanks go out to Andrew Hui of Comparative Literature and Angela Holzer from Germanic Languages/Lit for volunteering. The first meeting will likely take place this Saturday for about 30-45 minutes. However, if you can't come this Saturday but want to volunteer, Ms. Safran will add you to the e-list for future meetings. Running an event such as this, can teach you how to work on committees and plan/run events as this is a part of the life of both private industry and academia.

### **C. Department Updates - Chemistry, Classics, Molbio**

Ms. Esparza explained that this is a new part of GSG meetings in which two to three representatives from various departments give a 2-3 minute presentation on the state of affairs in their departments. Ms. Percheski noted that she will send a list of the order for departments to present to Assembly.

Ms. Lin, the Molbio representative, explained that Molecular Biology is in general a very happy department with high stipends and very helpful and concerned faculty. They recently changed generals from the end of the second year to the middle of the second year with the purpose of expediting the mandatory teaching duties so that students can focus on studies in later years and graduate on time. Despite high stipends, many students are concerned with affordable housing. Mr. Silberman asked how the department is adjusting to the move from a six-year program to a five-year program. Ms. Lin answered that it was not a big problem since the department has internal funding and has been able to fund its students if they go over their program length.

Tyrel McQueen, the representative from Chemistry, reported that his department is also doing very well. There are concerns about housing and a primary concern is post-enrollment. Chemistry is formally a five-year program, however, last year several

students were placed on DCC after only four years. Although all these students agreed to be placed on DCC status, there is concern that faculty might use this as an opportunity to cut funding and force people out before the program length expires. Currently, only students that agree with their advisors to go on DCC status early do so with their consent. A representative asked why would some students agree to go on DCC ahead of time. Mr. McQueen answered that it is special circumstances, such as a student that was graduating in 4.5 years and already had a job prospect therefore they do not really care about the extra year. They make an agreement with their advisor so that they can save their advisor money since their advisor is paying their tuition. Mr. Silberman questioned how the department can cut funding ahead of contract length (5 years). Mr. McQueen responded that Chemistry is trying to move to a four-year program and current contracts are worded as to guarantee funding "up to four years." The department has not yet made a clear articulation to graduate students of the intended changes to move to a four-year program.

The Classics representative, Kellam Conover, reported that Classics, unlike Molbio and Chemistry, is not a happy department and is undergoing a big transition. Classics used to have a very demanding curriculum and a sequence of as many as four general, three specialized, and six language exams, which extended program length greatly. The department has changed the generals requirements in order to streamline the process and reduce the time-to-degree, but it is too early to see the results. Housing is a major concern for Classic department students who have lower stipends than students in other departments. This concern is particularly salient among more advanced students who have the lowest stipends and priority in the draw. , especially among older students, which entered on low stipends and remain on them, while at the same time having lower priority in the draw. And of course post-enrollment is a major concern due to long time-to-degree. Usually students look for various additional fellowships through various centers or the department when they are post-enrolled.

## **V. New Business**

Ms. Esparza brought to Assembly a proposal to change the GSG constitution to eliminate the Assistant Chair, which is not elected, from the line of succession to the Chair. Following a discussion on the wording, the proposal was amended so that the sentence

concerning the Assistant Chair be completely stricken from the Constitution.

**Proposed Amendment to the GSG Constitution  
Presented in writing at the January 12, 2005 GSG Assembly  
submitted by Nicole Esparza, GSG Chair**

**Taking the Assistant Chair out of the line of succession.**

*Explanatory Statement. In the event that a Chair has appointed an Assistant Chair and the Chair later steps down, the current Constitution gives the Assistant Chair the power to become the Acting Chair of the GSG above the elected GSG Officers. This amendment takes the Assistant Chair position out of the line of succession.*

*Text of the Amendment:*

The following changes shall be made to Article V, Clause 2 of the Constitution:

1. In Paragraph A, the sentence "If there is an Assistant Chair, the Assistant Chair shall succeed before the Parliamentary Secretary." shall be stricken.

Ms. Esparza moved for Assembly to accept the proposal for consideration and a vote at the next meeting. Mr. Donev seconded. The motion passed 17-0-1.

Ade Artemis brought forth an argument pointing out that the GSG constitution is racist since it excludes groups like the Black Graduate Caucus from voting on funding issues and makes it almost impossible to change it in the Constitution. A heated discussion ensued which ended with the agreement that Ms. Hinkson will discuss the issue with BGC Executive Committee and if they wish to request a change to the constitution, she will inform Assembly and the Executive Committee.

Beth McKeown reported that the Graduate School published official guidelines for [parental leave](#) for both male and female students. The main point is fully funded leave for six weeks. These are, however, only recommendations and not binding.

Mr. Silberman, in his capacity as GC representative, announced that the GC House Committee will host its Formal dance in March in Proctor Hall.

## **VI. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Social Chair Aleksandar Donev