



GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
University of Rhode Island

URI GSA Executive Meeting

Date: 03/02/2024, 1:00 p.m. – 3:11 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Members in Attendance:

Asta Habtemichael	President
Karolina Wojcik	Vice-President
Showrov	Webmaster
Joseph Owusu-Sarfo	GAU Liasson
Helani Singhapurage	Secretary

Members in Absence:

Obed B. Amoah	Treasurer
Abraham Otele	Social Media Manager/ Event Coordinator Assistant

[1] Call to order:

The GSA E-board First Meeting of the Spring Semester was held online on March 2nd, 2024. It began at 1:07 p.m.

[2] Report from the President

Asta -

- Updates on position transitions for the president, vice-president and secretary and the vacant position Event coordinator. Informed on not having the full access to President role (not having access to the bank accounts yet)
- A possible new email and drive for GSA rather than a personal drive by the end of March.
- Stated the Vice-President's responsibilities on keeping track of the governing body activities mostly.
- The two new senators recruited from the Pharmacy department. And about recruiting new senators.
- Figuring out a new way to communicate with current e-board members and Cara Mitnick the GSA Graduate school advisor. (A new WhatsApp group/ email chain)
- Figuring bank accounts with the previous secretary.
- Upcoming April election and transition between current and new e-board members during May, June months.
- Focusing on
 - Changing bylaws and constitution wording with constitution and bylaws committee and updating the website with new forms for reimbursements etc.
 - Having Conversations on changing the structure.
 - Constitution and bylaws committee looking into roles fulfillment to be verified for e-board members to the fullest extent. Some wording changes to come towards the current role fulfilling comments in the constitution and bylaws. The committee suggested meeting three times per semester where all members are expected to show up. At least the voting members, the President, Vice-president, past president, treasurer, and secretary must show up to all the meetings. This revision will happen with the overall policy change that is being proposed and will be voted to go into effect in Fall 2024.
- On the work he completed by the book as the Vice-president playing the missing roles of President and secretary because of the resignation of President and secretary.
- Difficulties in providing funds to Student groups due to the challenging financial status.

Showrov- Suggested a google space for communication. Karolina and Joseph agreed on the idea.



Asta – Wanted to create a google group if he can't arrange the access to the existing GSA email group upon discussion with Cara Mitnick next week.

[3] Report from the Vice-President:

Karolina-

- Interest in sharing a google document of By-laws and constitution in meetings and having transparency of what the bylaws committee does.
- Possible remuneration of Event coordinator position to the 3 members of the Community services and Events committee since GSA doesn't have an Event coordinator for Spring 2024 because the events committee bears the burden of that suddenly vacant position.

Asta –

- Vice president and secretary will have access to updates by the constitution and By-laws committee before it goes to the floor for approval. The secretary will make the final update on the documents and sign it to be posted on the website.
- Though the Community Service and Events committee are working beyond and above, since there is no wording on remuneration allocation in the books (constitution and by-laws), it might be an issue. However, it is a valid request. An e-board member can't hold 2 e-board positions but can be an e-board member playing a role in a committee as well. The chair of a committee should be someone from the governing body. All the things about remuneration restructuring and other work should be conveyed to the governing body by the Vice-President. Thus, I am sending this matter to the general assembly for consultation and decision. Changes in the constitution and bylaws are made by the governing body because the President only works as an advisor to the constitution and by-laws committee. If the idea of remuneration is approved by a vote it is okay.

Showrov – Since GSA faced issues with sudden resignations, in the upcoming elections nominees should be informed on being accountable for one academic year.

Karolina- Put forward idea to Asta whether he would like to be remunerated for playing additional 2 roles (President and Secretary) as the Vice-president for the past 3 months (Fall 2023). Whether it is needed to put forward in the March general assembly.

Asta – appreciated the VP thinking of it and mentioned he is not expecting any increase or change in remuneration for covering these roles. As mentioned earlier it is up to the governing body to decide. If the VP and other board members think it should be considered, then it may be presented to the general assembly, but the president puts the point that this might be setting precedence and will affect future procedures as well. Thus, it should be done cautiously and thoroughly discussed.

Karolina - Updated on March and April events. Informed on the back pay issue request by Cherie.

Joseph – Agreed to take Cherie's inquiry to the GAU in the next week's meeting.

Karolina – Gave an Update on the fund request from the Persian Student group for the Spring 2023 semester. Need of the photos of the funded student group events to post on GSA social media platforms.

Asta – Envision on funding student groups. Mainly on Student group registration, creating forms to request funding, reporting on graduate student numbers in the student group.

Showrov – Mentioned the need of keeping the integrity of GSA finances. suggested on allocating a limit of funding for a student group in an academic year and having these events open to all graduate students.



[4] Report from the Secretary:

Helani-

- Gave an update on her transition.
- Informed that she received Fall 2023 minutes from the prior secretary. (2 general assembly meeting minutes, and 3 e-board minutes are available to approve)
- Informed her plans on sharing minutes to be approved in the upcoming general assembly.
- Informed on requesting Cara Mitnick to share the monthly announcements via Graduate School newsletter until she receives the access to GSA official email.
- Mentioned on Sending photos of the rock climbing to Abraham to share in GSA social media platforms.

[5] Report from the Webmaster:

Showrov-

- Commented on the limited space available in the GSA website.
- Discussed Possible ways to save space with Asta.
- Having a google drive to store past flyers, photos of events is great.
- Informed that the Webmaster, President, and treasurer has access to the website.

Karolina- Need information on the graduate student list and information from the Graduate School.

Asta – GSA is an independent organization funded by Graduate Students.

[6] New Business:

N/A

[7] Announcements:

N/A

[8] Adjournment:

Showrov made a motion to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The meeting ended at 3:11 p.m.

Helani Singhapurage, Secretary

03/02/2024