



## URI GSA Executive Board Meeting

**Date:** October 18th, 2024

**Time:** 5:02-6:43 pm

**Location:** Zoom

### Members in Attendance: (Executive Council)

Karolina Wojcik	President
Mariam Oladepo	Treasurer
Evelyn Mensah	Secretary
Asta Habtemichael	Past President
Marianne Otoo	GAU Liaison
Waqar Alam	Event Coordinator
Evans Boateng-Boakye	Social Media Manager/Event Coordinator Assistant
Showrov Rahman	Webmaster

### Member in Absence

Quinn Tucker	Vice President (Family Vacation)
--------------	----------------------------------

#### I. Call to order

The GSA's fourth executive meeting, convened via Zoom on October 18, 2024, began at 5:02 p.m.

#### II. Approval of Minutes

Meeting Minutes (09.20.2024): Seven votes were in favor, and one abstention was made from Asta, who was not present at the 09.20.2024 meeting. It was motioned by Showrov and seconded by Waqar.

#### III. Upcoming Vacancy for Webmaster Position (Showrov)

- Discussion about the upcoming vacancy for the Webmaster position, including the history of the role, the need for coding knowledge, and the process for selecting a new Webmaster. The current Webmaster has served for two years and is stepping down due to term limits defined in the Constitution. Detailed discussion on the transition process for the Webmaster, including the creation of a self-nomination form and the selection process.

- Showrov inquired about the need to vote for a new faculty advisor as the current advisor's term is ending, and Asta led a discussion about the current faculty advisor. Cara stepped in for the Dean, and he shared relevant information about the faculty advisor's term. Karolina reported that Cara announced she would conclude her term in 2025 and that a new faculty advisor will need to be elected in fall 2025.

#### IV. Old Business

- **Email to Stephanie with Withum:** Karolina sent a follow-up email to Stephanie since we haven't heard from her. She checked in to ensure that our association's nonprofit filing status was being updated and that we were receiving the services that the association requested.
- **Master of Library Information Science (MLIS) Program Representation:** Cara communicated the need for a GSA representative to nominate a student for the Director of Libraries search committee. Quinn sent out self-nomination requests to the MLIS Program. Three additional senators were nominated and placed on the publicity, events, and GradConference committees.

#### V. New Business

- **GAU + Markeisha Miner presentation during the November 22 senate meeting:** Markeisha Miner, VP of Community, Equity, and Diversity, will present at the November senate meeting. GAU will also present and discuss the upcoming contract negotiation and invite participants to join the joint graduate student and administration committee. Karolina, Quinn, and Marianne met with GAU leaders to discuss events as well as association and union similarities and differences. GAU is only able to support union members who pay dues at events. **Sharing Events Calendar:** The potential for joint events with GAU was discussed, with an emphasis on the challenges of funding and sponsorship.
- **Budget Proposals:** The need to compile and review budget proposals from various committees was discussed. All committees were requested to submit their budget proposals by October 18th. The graduate student conference committee received a 48-hour extension due to leadership changes.
- **Benevolence Fund Proposal:** A proposal for a benevolence fund to assist students facing financial hardship was discussed. Concerns were raised about establishing clear criteria and ensuring the feasibility of the fund. Mariam proposed setting specific eligibility guidelines. Asta emphasized the need to define "financial hardship" clearly to assess funding requirements and to ensure the fund's sustainability and fairness. Additionally, the group discussed assigning roles, updating bylaws and constitutions, and refining the definition of "hardship" for fund eligibility. Mariam requested that the bylaw committee draft a clause to support the fund's establishment. Karolina noted that reimbursements for conferences and regalia are currently not covered in the constitution. Mariam also raised concerns about potential fraud and called for a vote on these matters. Karolina plans to present this proposal at the upcoming Senate meeting for further discussion. Asta suggested that Karolina add more details to the proposal to strengthen the case before seeking a Senate vote. Mariam expressed a preference for holding an internal vote on the project before it is formally presented to the Senate.

Karolina will continue to refine the proposal and develop an implementation mechanism before bringing it to the Senate for approval.

- **Event planning:** Various ideas for a December event were discussed, including an off-campus trip to Mystic, Connecticut, games at Providence, and a holiday party or gala. Transportation and logistics were major considerations. Plans for a game night or potluck on campus were proposed for November. Emphasis on the responsibility of the event coordinator to organize three events per semester and the importance of clear communication and delegation within the events committee. Asta insisted on giving event choices to the event coordinator to communicate and discuss with the event committee instead of dictating events. This idea was fully backed by Mariam.
- **Graduate Student Conference Update:** The importance of faculty involvement in the graduate student conference was highlighted. The importance of clear communication and delegation within the committee was discussed. The idea of ending the conference with a gala was proposed. Karolina suggested collaborating with GAU for the event gala, Asta stated that GAU has not collaborated with GSA events in the past due to the issue of financing, which is limited to only GAU members and not extended to general graduate students like GSA. Suggestions were made to have representatives from various committees on the graduate student conference committee to facilitate better coordination and input.

## VI. Announcements

- A. **Treasurer:** Mariam sought clarification regarding the previously discussed benevolence fund proposal. She asked whether the executive members need to review and approve the proposal before it is presented to the Senate.
- B. **Secretary:** Evelyn communicated with the executive members about the committees that have submitted their budget proposals and stated she is awaiting the budget proposal from the graduate student conference committee before compiling the documents and sending it to the budget committee for review before the next senate meeting.
- C. **Event Coordinator:** Waqar reemphasized the event plans discussed earlier.
- D. **Social Media Manager:** Evans mentioned an email sent to him to request his availability and officially invite him to the committee he was appointed to as a GSA representative, the Accessibility Task Force with Vice President Reynolds (Student Affairs), Vice President Benson (Administration & Finance), and Vice President of Community, Equity, and Diversity.
- E. **GAU Liason:** Marianne reemphasized and stated her supporting some of the ideas and suggestions made earlier by Asta concerning collaborating with GAU for events. She stated that GAU will always look out to support their members who have paid dues as compared to the general graduate students. She advised on being aware of these facts when planning joint events with GAU.

## VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 pm after a motion by Mariam and a second from Waqar.