



URI GSA Executive Board Meeting

Date: September 20, 2024, 5:00-6:28 PM

Location: Zoom

Members in Attendance: (Executive Council)

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

Member in Absence:

Asta Habtemichael

Past President

I. Call to order

The GSA's third executive meeting convened via Zoom on September 20, 2024, began at 5:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

Meeting Minutes (07.26.2024) and (08.27.2024): Six votes were in favor, and one abstention was made from Marianne, who was not present at either 07.26.24 or 08.27.24 meetings. Motioned by Showrov, seconded by Mariam.

III. Status of Amended By-Laws (Karolina)

- The GSA By-Law was amended based on the federal request on Article of Incorporation by Withum which was hired to maintain the association's nonprofit filing status. Awaiting Showrov, the webmaster to upload the document on the GSA website. Karolina reiterated the importance of uploading the amended by-laws to allow the contracted company to begin working on the necessary updates.

IV. Senate Self-Nominations (Quinn)

- A. **Acceptances**- Quinn reported that 39 students have accepted positions as Senators. However, some will be unable to attend the first Senate meeting due to a prior commitment involving a workshop. Quinn plans to reschedule a meeting to provide an update to those senators unable to attend the initial meeting due to the upcoming workshop.



B. Welcome Letter Email and Resources: Quinn has already sent out individual emails to the new Senators, welcoming them and providing essential resources to get them prepared for their roles. He has been in contact with each Senator individually via email to ensure they are informed and engaged. Quinn also mentioned needing to meet with Karolina to discuss meeting logistics of the upcoming Senate meeting.

C. Senate Agenda

1. **Committee selections:** As part of the upcoming Senate meeting, there will be discussions around the formation of committees. While Karolina highlighted several essential committees and their respective roles, Evans expressed concern that the Publicity Committee, which had been previously discussed, was not included. He requested that it be added to ensure adequate event promotion and outreach, especially as the GSA moves forward with new initiatives.
2. **Grad Council and JAPORA self-nominations-** Karolina mentioned that now that the Senate is established, nomination forms will be sent out, allowing Senators to self-nominate for any committee of their choice, with a particular focus on the Graduate Council and JAPORA committees.

V. Updates on GAU (Marianne)

- The discussion focused on establishing various committees, such as the Social Justice Committee, and exploring the potential need for a Diversity and Inclusion Committee. A concern was raised about duplicating efforts, as other university unions already have similar initiatives.
- The group discussed the importance of not duplicating efforts across multiple graduate student organizations, such as the GSA and GAU. Both organizations serve similar constituencies (graduate students), so it makes sense to partner rather than host separate, overlapping initiatives.
- Collaboration is seen to better utilize resources, like planning joint events that serve a broader graduate student audience, including social justice and diversity programs. The idea is to align GSA efforts with GAU's social justice work to avoid redundancy.

VI. Event Planning (Waqar)

- Events being planned for October 5, 2024, include a sports event (TopGolf) and a movie night. However, budget constraints make it difficult to proceed with expensive options like the sports event, which was estimated to cost around \$2,500 for 30 people. To keep within the budget, simpler options like a movie night were discussed as alternatives.
- There are strict budget limitations in place for the E-Board, which can only spend up to \$1,000 without obtaining Senate approval. This cap influences decisions about the types of events they can organize without Senate oversight. For larger or more expensive events, there is a need to get approval from the Senate, which could delay planning and execution.
- There is also mention of a prior event that cost 6,500, which was approved due to its traditional nature, but similar expenses may not always receive automatic approval. The Budget and Finance Committee has not yet established a budget



for the year, and discussions are underway to ensure that future budget proposals cover event planning, publicity, and other essential areas.

- A key concern raised is the timing of communication for event announcements. Events need at least two weeks' notice for proper promotion, yet the team had been considering launching events with only 10 days' notice, which could result in low turnout. The Publicity Chair is responsible for creating flyers and promotional material, and there's a need for a smooth workflow where the event details are finalized early, so the publicity team can start advertising in advance. For example, for the movie night event, it was discussed the logistics of reserving a space (like Swan Hall or Memorial Union), confirming the number of attendees, and organizing pizza or other refreshments.
- The way forward was to establish a calendar for the academic year with dates for key events or future events, so they could be more proactive, allow ample time for promotion and preparation, and allow the events committee to take on the responsibility of planning while focusing on student engagement and reducing overlap with other graduate student groups.
- The Events Committee will soon be formed, and once established, they will be responsible for planning and executing future events. This will relieve the executive board from directly managing every aspect of event planning.
- The E-board talked about introducing the Senate and committee structures at future meetings to delegate responsibility effectively and allow for better collaboration among various groups. The consensus is that events need to be well-planned, widely promoted, and organized efficiently to serve the maximum number of students.

VII. Adjournment

Showrov motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mariam seconded. The meeting ended at 6:28 p.m.