

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES
October 19, 2014
7:00 P.M.
SARKEY'S ENERGY COMPLEX A-235

The meeting is called to order at 7:01

A motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting is brought to the floor by Senator 59, seconded by Senator 86. The motion passes.

The chair reports that she participated in the Homecoming parade, and was glad that GSS had a presence in this event. She also reports that she will meet with a head of transportation about improving the bus system at OU – in particular, improving late night service for those who take late night classes. Any additional concerns about busses at OU should be addressed to her, so that she can bring these concerns to attention.

The Vice Chair reports that a fourth person for graduate council is still needed.

The Secretary, Academic Affairs, Development and Philanthropy, External Affairs, and Human Diversity have nothing to report.

Internal affairs reports that they are sorting through GSS bylaws, streamlining them and making them accurate. We should expect to see legislation pertaining to this in the next few weeks.

Problems and Projects has nothing to report.

Public Relations reports that GSS now has a twitter! (OU_GradSenate). We have now entered a new age, #PRrocks.

Ways and Means reports that the first round of grading grant proposals has begun. They received 103 proposals and we should expect to see a bill by next meeting.

Dean Lee Williams addresses the Senate. He is the Dean of the Graduate College, the entity with authority over all graduate programs. The job of the graduate college is to maintain a consistency of standard across all 60 departments that grant 172 different graduate degrees (so that an OU graduate degree has value) and serve as a voice within the academic administration for graduate students.

He speaks about the relationship OU has with its graduate students – while the University takes on a more parental role with respect to undergraduate students, the university looks upon graduate students as scholarly apprentices. Graduate Students form a distinct different demographic - for instance 40% are in a long term relationship, and 23% have their own families. The university has approximately 6,000 graduate students - 4,000 of whom are residents and 2,000 are not (some in the College of Liberal Studies, some on military bases) and the new provost wishes to grow the graduate programs at OU (in particular master's degree programs). The Graduate College must adapt to serve the needs of this ever expanding community while maintaining standards. For instance, the graduate students off camps have a more difficult time networking. For solutions to a lot of these problems, the Graduate College can look to departments that do a particular task well and make their methods known. Otherwise, the Graduate College hopes to improve the graduate experience by using a system called CollegeNet to help departments recruit students, to help students apply to graduate departments, and to help students once they are in the Graduate College (keeping track of their progress, forming their committee, etc.).

Another way the Graduate College tries to meet the need of the population it serves is through the Graduate Student Life Center and through Career Services. The former provides a social outlet for graduate students - for instance, a family night is held once a month with free babysitting. It also provides conference rooms, or a quiet space to think. The latter provides professional development - for instance, an etiquette training dinner will be held once a semester. All in all, the Graduate College is there to receive input from graduate students, and serve our needs.

SENATE BILL NO. GF14-15 (An Act Relating to Emergency Funding Eligibility) is brought to the floor by senator 75, seconded by Senator 33. The act will be tabled; the authors say there was an error when the bill was created. However, they explain the bill as it is intended so that there will be less confusion about it in the future. Current laws only let student organizations created within the first four weeks of school receive emergency funding. This act will remove that restriction, and have funding be more widely available.

Senator 96 asks for clarification. The authors clarify that a student organization need exist only one week prior to receiving emergency funding. The bill is tabled by Senator 86, seconded by senator 71.

SENATE BILL NO. GF14-16 (SGA Superior Court) is brought to the floor by Senator 59, seconded by Senator 96. There were three vacancies that needed to be filled on the Supreme Court at OU. The Supreme Court rules on things involving the constitution and academic misconduct cases. It is comprised of seven members. Open Applications were available from October 1st through the 8th. There were 7 applications, of which the selection committee chose five to come for an interview, and then the three candidates were chosen: Grace Dawkins, Katelyn King, and Crystal Valdez. Attributes

the committee looked for were knowledge of law and/or politics, as well as a passion for service to the student body.

Senator 69 asks how many cases the Supreme Court receives in a year. The author responds that the Supreme Court does not meet that often. They are called upon sometimes to rule in cases regarding election violations and occasionally to challenge acts of Congress (for example, they nullified an attempt to place a GPA limit in order to serve in SGA). They also validate election results.

Senator 33 asks how long the candidates' terms will be. The author responds that they will serve until they retire or graduate.

Senator 65 asks the candidates why they applied. Each mentioned an interest in the judiciary and public service, and felt this task combined these two interests nicely.

Senator 14 asks why there was only one week given for prospective candidates to apply. The author responds that although this was not ideal, the minimal requirements for open applications were met by this, and the author wanted the Supreme Court full ready in case problems occur during the upcoming elections.

The motion to pass by unanimous consent is made by Senator 33, and seconded by Senator 59. There are no objections, and the motion passes.

SENATE BILL NO. GF14-17 (An act designating poll locations for the Fall 2014 General Elections) is brought to the floor by Senator 59, seconded by Senator 65. The act designates the polling locations for the upcoming elections. One will be at Couch Restaurant, one in the Bizzel Memorial Library, and the other at the Union. The goal of these polling sites is to be especially accessible to freshman, hopefully getting them in the habit of voting early.

Senator 59 asks if students will have to pay in order to make it to the polling location in Couch restaurant. The author does not know at this point in time, but will try to have the location in the lobby so that students don't have to pay. Senator 14 asks where the polling location in the Library will be and if it will disturb students studying. The author responds that the location will be by the Bookmark, and should not disturb students. Senator 71 asks if all voting is done by paper, or if any of it is done online. The author responds that voting is available online. Senator 75 asks why there is not a polling location on the Law Campus or near Meteorology. The author responds that as this is an undergraduate student election, it is doubtful that the students on these campuses would be interested in voting. Senator 65 asks why all voting is not done online. The author responds that bylaws require that there be at least one physical polling location. Senator 69 asks for clarification, and the author clarifies that voting can be done online and not at a polling location.

The motion to pass by unanimous consent is made by Senator 66, and seconded by Senator 93. There are no objections, and the motion passes.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. GF14-18 (A Resolution thanking the service of President David L. Boren and First Lady Molly Shi Boren; and providing for distribution) is brought to the floor by Senator 59 and seconded by Senator 86. It is a resolution thanking President Boren and his wife for twenty years of service to the university, in time for the Regent's meeting.

The motion to pass by unanimous consent is made by Senator 59, and seconded by Senator 13. There are no objections, and the motion passes.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. GF14014 (A Resolution requesting a chain be placed around the seal on the South Oval; providing for distribution) is brought to the floor by Senator 59 and seconded by Senator 86. It is a resolution to put a chain around the seal on the Stewart Landing.

Senator 59 asks if Boren wrote this resolution or if others did. The author responds that Boren directed students to write a resolution, but the content was left up to the students. Senator 87 asks if a chain would be placed around the seal. The author responds that it will most likely be a rope instead. Senator 14 asks who will pay for the rope. The author responds that Boren, most likely, would pay for the rope. Senator 97 asks why the seal was put in the ground if it is not to be walked upon. The author responds that this is not an unprecedented tradition, and that the University of Michigan has the same tradition. Another argument is that the seal is art, which should not be walked upon. Senator 97 asks if the rope would be a hazard to bikers. The author responds that the area is adequately lit by four lights.

Senator 87 requests a friendly resolution removing the 6th, 8th, and 9th whereas clauses of the bill (these are the one pertaining to the chain). As this would invalidate the title of the bill and one cannot change the title of the bill without a placard vote, Senator 59 votes to table the amendments, seconded by Senator 87. The motion to table the bill is made by Senator 59, seconded by Senator 14. There are no objections, and the motion passes.

The Chair reminds the Senate that the next meeting will be on November 2nd. The motion to adjourn is made by Senator 59, and seconded by Senator 88. The meeting is adjourned at 7:55.