

# Boston University Graduate Student Organization

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## Minutes

Tuesday, September 30, 2014  
5:30 – 6:30 CAS 200

### 1. Announcements

**Evan Judd** opened the meeting by welcoming attending GSO representatives. Encouraged new members to sign-in to ensure their department is represented.

### 2. Treasurer's Report

The organization's operating fund for the remainder of the academic year is **\$11,006.47**. The research travel grant account has **\$3,232** which has yet to be awarded.

### 3. Adam Kleinberger—Ombudsman Outreach Presentation

Adam Kleinberger, an associate Ombudsman from the Ombudsman's office at Boston University visited the GSO to give an outreach presentation.

The Ombuds Office provides community, student, staff, and faculty outreach for issues people may be having. Ombudsmen remain independent by not affiliating with any school, college, or department. Their funding comes from the president's budget, and they act as employees, but all information remains confidential. In addition, the office remains neutral and informal. Formal complaints cannot be issued via the Ombuds Office and records are not held.

The following questions were addressed to Adam from GSO representatives:

How does the Ombuds Office work with Title IX?

The Office is listed as an "other"; they remain confidential, make no formal statements to or for BU. In regards to the Title IX issue, if a student approached an Ombudsman, it would remain off the record, and the Office would help in exploring their various options for their particular cases.

What guarantees your independence? How is confidentiality maintained?

There is a professional standard upheld by a Code of Conduct via the Ombudsman Association. The Ombudsmen at BU are all certified Ombudsman practitioners. If you had an ethical complaint, you could report an Ombudsman to this association to launch an investigation. Additionally, Ombudsmen often report

to a board or a C.O.O. There are also charters that determine how the Ombudsmen need to work.

What do the Ombudsmen report to the board, C.O.O., or president if no records are held?

It is not as if the Ombudsmen are reporting to the president, but they remain connected to the President. A large goal for the Ombudsmen Office is to change the institution for the better by talking about trends. These are reported in non-identifiable cases, for example, they might report that in a specific year they have seen a number of cases involving a particular problem. The university can then take steps towards creating awareness and solving the problem on a university level.

There are many resources for students and staff, and as graduate students make up the biggest portion of visitors to the Office, they want to let all graduate students know what their Office entails. Since this is also a relatively new office, Evan suggested letting each department know whether via email or word of mouth.

#### **4. Vika Zafrin—Open Access Week Events**

Vika Zafrin from the Open Access Institutional Repository at Boston University visited the GSO representatives to advertise upcoming events for graduate students and faculty during Open Access week between October 20<sup>th</sup> and October 26<sup>th</sup>.

As of late 2009, the Faculty and University Councils voted that open access was a good thing for the university and adopted an open access policy, providing free digital publications from faculty, students, and alumni at Boston University. In 2010, Zafrin was hired to manage this department, and as of now there are 8500 items published there, mostly digital theses and dissertations. The Repository is currently working on digitizing dissertations and theses from 1963.

The decision to provide open access adopted an “opt-in” policy, meaning a faculty member or a student would choose to upload these materials. Boston University is transitioning to a “opt-out” policy, similar to those at Harvard and MIT, only with faculty publications. Typically the final author’s draft after peer review and before copy editing will by default be deposited. The author may opt out on an item-by-item basis. All works will be archived, but if an author chooses to opt-out, the publication would be archived and remain unavailable. The opt-out policy was voted favorably by the Faculty Council in May and is currently in consideration by the University Council and Deans.

More information on this process will be provided on Wednesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> between 3 and 5 in the GSU Conference Auditorium with a reception to follow. Events exclusively for graduate students will be held on Tuesday, October 21<sup>st</sup> in L109 on the Med Campus and Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> between 1:30 and 3:30 at Sibley Way.

The floor was then open for questions from the GSO representatives:

When does electronic submission for theses start?

It started in May 2013 for the GRS, GMS, and the School of Theology. Tim Barbari's office decided as of January 1, 2015, all students would submit online.

Is this just another place publications would be stored? What if we already archive our publications with our department?

The individual department archives do not provide students with a permanent link. The Open Access Institutional Repository would give a personal link for each submission and a permanent online space. The purpose of the program is to create a comprehensive research portfolio for Boston University—this is what the university is doing institutionally. The archives only show what is being done for each subject.

We can upload journal articles, but are the journals always alright with this? Is it our responsibility to ensure this?

Most journals are fine with open access policies. Some impose embargos, or even restrict which version is made open. Some have a six to twenty-four month waiting period after the publication is released. Check the publisher's policy, or contact the department at <http://www.bu.edu/library/help/openbu> for help with specifics. More information will also be available during the open access events.

## **5. Matt Danish—Vote for Commonwealth Avenue Reconstruction Committee**

Matt Danish visited the GSO to update the representatives on the Commonwealth Avenue Reconstruction plans and to request the formation of an official committee to make the student voice from Boston University heard.

The construction plans still do not include any significant changes to the safety of bicycle and pedestrian access along Commonwealth Avenue. Currently, we have a 25% design from two years ago, and a 75% design which is more recent, but harder to read. The city is currently working on another set of plans set to be released September, but October. Matt will forward a link to the website with the current plans to the GSO representatives.

The GSO needs to form a statement about what the committee should entail. The committee will recommend and promote changes to the design of Commonwealth Ave Phase 2A, and future projects, with the intent of improving pedestrian, bicyclist and public transit facilities along the street.

Evan motioned to firm the Commonwealth Avenue Reconstruction Committee to change the design of Commonwealth Avenue Phase 2a; Adam seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Evan motioned to elect Matt Danish as the chair of the Commonwealth Avenue Reconstruction Committee. Adam seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Those interested in joining the committee should email [gso@bu.edu](mailto:gso@bu.edu). Matt will contact interested parties about arranging meetings with the committee. The funding opens October 1<sup>st</sup>, so it is crucial that interested representatives and others from their departments get involved quickly.

## **6. Socially Responsible Investing Committee**

The previous graduate student representative on the Socially Responsible Investing Committee graduated last semester, and the vacant seat needed to be filled. The Committee is responsible for advising the Board of Trustees in matters of responsible endowment investments in companies and funds. The Committee consists of three faculty members, two undergraduate students, and one graduate student. The trustees make the final decisions, and this information is generally not shared openly with the public. The nine university representatives are all voting members, including the graduate representative.

Ben Thompson volunteered to be the graduate representative on this committee. Evan motioned to elect Ben as the representative; Adam seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Evan requested that within the parameters of confidentiality, Ben update the GSO representatives on the issues of investment as they arise. He suggested methods such as polling the representatives for their opinions on non-specific items to gauge general opinion among the students.

## **7. Co-Sponsored Event—Paul Edwards, AMNESP Conference**

Paul Edwards from the American and New England Studies Program attended to request \$1000 for the “New England and the World” conference at The Elie Wiesel Center for Judaic Studies on October 24<sup>th</sup> and October 25<sup>th</sup>. Graduate students from across the country, as well as Germany and England will be attending this event. The event is free and open to the public.

The event will be advertised across the GRS, as well as across the river at Harvard. The conference will focus on people in the city, Boston and urban planning, colonial identity, rethinking the New England mind, and careers outside academia. The attendance is projected at 40 seats, although they are hoping for more, and have space for between 65 and 70.

The event has currently received funding from the English and the History Departments. The proposed \$1000 would go towards paying for lunch and other reception costs. The total budget for the event was \$4500, and the \$1000 request is below the 50% limit.

Evan motioned to fund the full amount of \$1000; Adam seconded. The motion passed.

## **8. BGLO Involvement**

BGLO, the Boston Graduate Leadership Organization, is a group dedicated to uniting graduate students from Boston schools. The group hosts networking events, volunteering, and mixers to create opportunities for graduate students to meet and interact.

The BGLO is requesting between \$250 and \$500 for an upcoming club night intended to be the kick-off for this organization. In the past, there have been covers to attend; however, this event at Wild Rover would not require that, meaning the GSO would not need to pay for students to attend. The BGLO is requesting that the GSO give the money for prizes for an icebreaker game instead.

Evan mentioned providing less, since he thought \$100 for prizes would be enough money. Kasey mentioned that the event is very popular among students, and we should give them at least the minimum of \$250. Kasey motioned to fund the event \$250; Evan seconded. The motion passed.

## **9. GSO Research Travel Grants**

As the research travel grants are not factored into the annual operating funds, the GSO representatives must vote to allot the money to the research travel grant fund.

**Evan** motioned to fund two awards at \$500 each for the fall research travel grants for travel. **Adam** seconded the motion; motion passed.