

Boston University Graduate Student Organization

Minutes
February 28, 2012

1. Announcements and Treasury Report

Announcements

The **Walk for Hunger** has contacted GSO. This year's event will be held Sunday, May 6. If anyone would like to form a team Leslie can ask the organizers for a team packet.

Boston Graduate Leadership Organization (BGLO) will soon start up again. There is a meeting at MIT in early March that will be leadership elections. Seasonal BGLO events will follow with the goal of helping area graduate students meet each other, network, and serve the community. Ideas for BGLO events are welcome.

BU will need a BGLO representative. Previously, meetings were held every two months at MIT. Any persons interested in representing BU in BGLO should contact Leslie.

A graduate student has contacted GSO about **MBTA fare hikes** that are slated to go into effect later this year. Persons interested in attending MBTA town hall meetings and/or potential organizing around this issue can contact Leslie to be put in touch with this student.

Treasure's Report

To date, GSO has spent or committed 12,036.23 of its annual budget.

- YTD Spending and/or Funds Encumbered: \$12,036.23
- Current Balance: \$ 2,963.77

The *Goodbye to Winter Reception* is currently about \$180 over budget. However GSO purchased 400 drink tickets @ \$4.50/ticket and will sell these tickets to attendees at \$2.00/ticket. These incoming funds will recoup the over amount and go toward tipping the bartenders. GSO may also be able to return/sell-back unsold drink tickets. There is every reason to believe that this event will, ultimately, come in under budget.

Going forward, two more pub nights are anticipated (@ +/- \$800 each) and the costs of food for GSO meetings (inclusive of this meeting) will also be incurred (@ 110-120 each). Therefore, at the outset of the meeting, the treasurer reported that **\$900 remains uncommitted.**

A percentage basis breakdown of GSO YTD spending is as follows:

- **80% Social Events**
- **12% Co-Sponsored Events**
- **6% Regular Meetings**
- **2% "Other"** (PhD Comics movie and survey raffle gift cards)

2. Introduction of Laura Wipf

Laura Wipf was introduced as the new Graduate Services Administrator in GRS. She will work with GSO and G-WISE. One area she will be active in is aiding Carol with the BU accounting requirements. She is also available to assist with event organization.

Laura said that her post is intended to be a link to the Graduate Student office and a voice for the student life concerns of grad students and anything that doesn't fall under Financial Aid, Records, and Admissions.

One event Laura will lead is next year's GRS-wide grad student orientation. This event builds on the GSO event held at beginning of the Fall 2011 semester. The orientation will be for incoming students, across all departments.

Laura solicited topic suggestions for orientation. The responses received were:

- Health insurance & BU Dental School Student Plan
- Understanding of consent (raised in the context of recent sexual assaults)
- Boston/Cambridge/Brookline Housing representatives.
- Library and library print quotas
- Behavioral health services
- Taxes
- Ombudsman
- BU Sustainability
- Other services and benefits available to grad students (e.g., day care, parental leave)
- Fitrec,
- Social activities
- Transportation/Parking
- List of business that take BU dining points
- GSO

It was suggested that housing information and other key contacts be made available through the GRS website.

Laura reported that web administration changes are coming that will eliminate many of the steps currently required to change website content. In the future, Laura will be able to update the page in real time. Therefore, if folks have ideas for what they would like to see done with the CAS/GRS website, all comments and suggestions are welcome.

3. Goodbye to Winter Reception Planning

The reception will be held on **Thursday, March 8**, in the Metcalfe Ballroom in the GSU, second floor. The event will run from **7-10pm**. GSO will sell drink tickets for \$2.00. Veronica will initiate the set-up from 6pm. Volunteers are needed to help with ticket sales during the course of the event.

The issue of music for the event still needs to be finalized--both the technical side and the content. Requests has been submitted with media services for detail on the room's sound system. Anyone interested to DJ—to supply music, if only through an ipod playlist—please contact Leslie or Veronica.

4. Co-Sponsored Event Application

A co-sponsored event application was submitted for the inaugural ***Culture Lab Symposium Series***. This new initiative involves the following departments: Musicology & Ethnomusicology, Romance Studies, History of Art & Architecture, and English.

The symposium series brings graduate students together to work on scholarship, discuss scholarship, and plan future work together. All the presenters are from BU. The event—which will be held **March 16**—is open to the BU community.

The total event budget is \$330. The organizers request GSO support in the amount of \$130 dollars (39% of the budget). These funds will help with advertising. The rest of the funding will be provided through small contributions from the various departments.

The discussion of the proposal emphasized that these sort of events should be a GSO priority. Even if monies were scarce, this would be a worthy use of funds. **The**

funding request for \$130 was approved.

5. Professional Development Funding Proposal

Ren Cashman volunteered to serve as the **professional development chair**. This position exists, but has been unfilled. This vote carried. Ren will serve as both co-sponsored events chair and professional development chair.

An application for funding support was received from a student in the Philosophy department.

The request asked that GSO underwrite coffee and pastries for an **independent student-initiated, student-led jurisprudence reading group** that focuses on natural law theory. Participants are drawn from, philosophy, political science, law, and the School of Theology. The reading group meets every other week. There are currently 12 students on the listserve. Interested parties are asked to contact Eric Rabin (Philosophy).

The application under consideration asked for \$70 to fund coffee and pastries for the reading group for the remainder of the semester.

Discussion of the application was widely supportive of the specific application and this type of student event more generally. However, a few reservations about process and precedent were expressed.

The primary discussion centered on the understanding that GSO has traditionally preferred to *co-sponsor* events, rather than provide full funding. This is reflected in the existing guideline that GSO will consider requests to co-sponsor up to 40% of event cost. In this case, the application requested 100% funding and was brought to GSO before asking any of the participating departments or the law school for support.

The application passed votes for \$20 and \$40, but did not pass a vote for \$60. The applicant was asked to solicit funding from other sources. Based on that outcome, GSO would be happy to reconsider the balance of the application

It was commented that GSO might consider introducing a specific guideline for funding ongoing low-cost series vs once-off events.

The reading group will also be added to the GSO website. Any student reading group is welcome to contact GSO to have their event posted.

6. New Business

Ian Schinich reported that the university is moving forward with an effort to review the BU portfolio with regard to socially responsible investment. Several years ago, GSO was first body within the university to call for a socially responsible investment initiative.

Ian has previously been involved in efforts to move the university in this direction. He reported that Dean Elmore has asked the undergraduate student union to have two student representatives be part of this and that the Dean told him GSO was also asked for representation. GSO has not received this request.

Ian asked for GSO support to continue representing graduate students on this issue. GSO cannot elect a representative to a specific body we have not been informed of. Nevertheless, **a vote was taken and passed that affirming Ian Schinich's involvement in socially responsible investing** on behalf of grad students.