

**Boston University**  
**Graduate Student Organization**

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**Minutes**

Wednesday, November 14, 2012  
5:30PM – School of Theology

**1. Announcements**

**ROMANCE STUDIES TEACHING FELLOWS INFO REQUEST**

A representative of the teaching fellows in the Romance Studies department brought a three question survey and asked department reps to fill it out and return it to her. The TF in her department are trying to gather information about how other departments structure TF responsibilities.

She asked department reps to complete the form and return it to her as they departed the meeting, if possible.

**DEPARTMENTAL AVAILABILITY SURVEY**

Carol thanked representatives who had completed the departmental survey. The results indicated that early on Wednesday and Thursday evenings (for example, 6PM) were best for some departments. Lunch time was also a notable preference.

**2. Treasurer's Report**

Carol reported that the GSO's current account balance is **\$11,331.71**.

This reflects the monies approved at the last meeting for the pub nights scheduled for November and December and the monies spent for pizza for today's meeting.

**3. BGLO – Yulefest 5K, Sunday, December 2**

BGLO has decided that the fall event will be participation in the Yulefest 5K on Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10AM.

The Race begins at Harvard Square in Cambridge and will be followed by a block party in a heated tent in Brattle Square. There will be beer at the block party. There will be prizes for the fastest people and also for best costume and the fastest

costumed runner.

The race benefits Cambridge Family & Children's Services. The entry fee is \$38, which gets you a T-shirt and entry to the block party. If you are not a runner, but you would like to participate, you can volunteer.

It was initially proposed that the GSO offer to pay \$18 toward the registration fee for the first 10 people who respond to the GSO email address. It was instead suggested that GSO offer less support to more people.

A proposal was put forward that the GSO set aside \$200 toward the cost of registration fees for the Yulefest. The GSO will reimburse \$10 of the registration fee for the first 20 people that contact the GSO via email to indicate their interest.

This proposal was seconded and the vote passed.

BGLO discussed having sweatbands for the BGLO participants. Leslie passed on Eliza's recommendation that GSO approve up to \$100 to contribute for BGLO sweatbands.

Leslie tabled the proposal. The proposal was not seconded—therefore no vote was held.

#### **4. Pub Nights**

Basil reported on the last pub night of the semester, on **Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**. At the last meeting it was suggested that this pub night be treated as a special event that featured food and drinks not usually included in the ordinary pub nights.

Basil is waiting for specific quotations on eggnog and mulled wine because these items are custom orders. It is estimated that the mulled wine will cost less than the eggnog. Hot spiced cider is also quoted at significantly less than the two beverages with alcohol.

On the food front—decidedly less costly than the alcohol—Basil also has quotations for festive snack options (cupcakes, ginger-cardamon scones, cranberry-walnut bars). These will replace the nachos customarily ordered for pub nights.

Discussion included the desirability eggnog and mulled wine and the desire to preserve as many of the regular drink tickets as possible.

A question was raised as to how popular pub night events are. The response was that they are the most attended events in the GSO. Approximately 150 of the 300 survey respondents last year had attended at least one pub night.

After receiving feedback, Basil ultimately presented the following estimate for consideration and a vote:

<p>75 regular drink tickets  33 eggnog drink tickets      2 gallons  33 mulled wine drink tickets   2 gallons  60 cider drink tickets  Festive snack foods</p> <p><b>Cost Estimate</b>  \$1048.50 – \$1213.50</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">IN TOTAL:  Same # of total alcoholic drinks as  usually available</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Variance due to low end-high end  estimates for alcohol</i></p>
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It was proposed that the GSO approve spending up to \$1100 on the December pub night. This was seconded. The vote passed. It was affirmed that Basil should work within the \$1100 ceiling to put maximize the drink options for the event.

**Friday, November 16**, is the next Pub Night.

**5. Meeting with Associate Provost for Grad Student Affairs**

The GSO officers stated that the Associate Provost meeting went well. He recognizes that the GSO is one of the largest organizations representing students on campus.

He was, however, not particularly keen about upgrading the health insurance plan for graduate students from 80% coverage to 100% coverage. He asked whether students would rather get \$900 more on their stipend or put that to the upgrade of their insurance plan. The GSO reps responded that they would prefer the health insurance upgrade. They report, however, that the associate provost did not seem to be interested in that course of action.

They also reported that the Associate provost was interested in ensuring that all graduate students admitted to get funding for 5 years of study. He is also interested in building incentives in to get students out in 5 years. In addition, he raised the matter of putting together a “financial calculator” for grad school.

Another topic of discussion was monthly graduation dates for PhDs. This topic, raised by the associate provost, would entail transcripts marked with the month requirements were completed as a student’s graduation date. Students would still participate in either the Winter, Summer, Spring commencement ceremonies.

The GSO reps raised the matter of parental leave indicated on last year’s survey. The associate provost indicated that he cannot do something on this front for

graduate students at the present time because the graduate student policy cannot be better than it is for post-docs. Nevertheless, he invited GSO to compile a list of other university policies in this area to guide future discussions. The GSO will act accordingly.

## **6. Professional Development & Co-Sponsored Events**

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Ren updated representatives on her plans to hold a 'young professors' panel combining faculty members from several different disciplines. This would involve professors who have recently been in the academic job market.

The initial idea had been to hold the event as a luncheon, but food costs are prohibitive. Ren is moving instead toward a format that would utilize an auditorium and have finger food/drinks to follow.

This event is being considered for the spring semester. Ren asked for volunteers to work with her on a committee to plan and execute the event. Interested persons can email Ren at [lcashman@bu.edu](mailto:lcashman@bu.edu)

Places that are "catering-free zones" were also briefly mentioned as a possibility to hold down costs.

An event featuring BU alumni working in non-academic areas was also suggested. Ren responded that could be a second event.

The top five suggestions for professional development from last year's survey were listed for representatives, with the request that another interested in working on any of the other fronts are welcome to take up the initiative and should contact Ren.

#### **These were the top-five suggestions from last year's survey:**

- Job-hunting workshops (academic, non-academic)
- Grant-writing workshops
- General networking events (other grad students, successful alumni)
- Career Fair (associate provost is interested in this)
- Resume Workshop

### **CO-SPONSORED EVENTS**

IR department representative announced that they will be submitting a proposal for their upcoming conference. The conference will be held during the spring semester.

Ren directed the rep to the information on the website, including the example proposal.

## 7. TRAVEL GRANTS

Evan brought copies of the current travel grant documents for representatives to review.

He also reminded meeting attendees that the travel grant deadline is December 2. He asked that people interested in being on the review committee contact him.

The question was raised whether someone could be on the review committee the same semester that they were applicants. The answer was no.

A suggestion was made to make wording around “of high graduate standing” should be more specific. Evan will take that up.

A question was also raised about how far along in their research a student should be? The response was that people can apply at any point in their course of study. And, although people may have already registered for the conference when they apply for the money, that is not required.

## 8. GRADUATE SEMINARS

Carol would like to set up some graduate student seminars. They would be held on a monthly basis. Perhaps 3-5 graduate students would present their research.

The seminars would give graduate students the opportunity to present research to people who are not in their field. Presenters could receive anonymous written feedback from seminar attendees.

These events could be cheap—entailing only the purchase of cookies and coffee.

A schedule and specific format are still be worked out. The first one will tentatively be held in February. Persons interested in helping Carol work out the details and plan these seminars for the spring should contact Carol [ccarveth@bu.edu](mailto:ccarveth@bu.edu)