

Boston University Graduate Student Organization

Minutes

Monday, February 23, 2015
5:30 – 6:30 CAS 200

1. Announcements

Kristen Carey began the meeting by introducing new and returning graduate students to the meeting. She requested that GSO representatives still attend two of the four meetings this semester, despite the cancellations due to snow.

There will be a pub night scheduled in early March. This will likely occur prior to the next GSO meeting, so representatives are urged to promote this event.

Kristen also notified the graduate representatives that the university has approved of new processes for PhD graduation, mainly in regards to paperwork. For more information, visit the GSO website.

The Graduate International Relations Council will be hosting a conference on Sunday between 8:30 - 5. There will be 20 panelists and 30 audience members, consisting primarily of graduate students. If you are interested in attending, purchase a ticket through Eventbrite. See the GSO Facebook page for more information.

2. Treasurer's Report

The organization's operating fund for the remainder of the academic year is **\$9,353.85**. This includes \$1000 committed to a pub night originally scheduled for December. Treasurer, **Adam Iaizzi**, also expects to receive \$250 back from the BGLO event held last semester.

In order to maintain the budget for next semester, the GSO needs to spend this money prior to the end of the semester. Adam suggested the following:

- Save money for research grants for next year
- Fund spring alternates for travel/research grants
- Fund fall alternates for travel/research grants (4 alternates, \$2000 total)
- Host a larger pub night
- Summer coffee event
- Encourage departments to apply for co-sponsored events

Kristen Carey motioned to fund all four fall travel and research grant alternates. Motion passed; new operating budget: **\$7,353.85**.

3. Fossil Fuel Divestment

Andrew Trlica spoke to the GSO representatives about the current student movement being formed to urge the Board of Trustees to divest from fossil fuels. Andrew approached the GSO to get signatures for a letter being drafted to the Board. This will be the first chance to approach the Board formally.

Andrew also requested that the GSO form a committee for divestment. Ben Thompson is currently the student liaison on the Advisory Committee of Socially Responsible Investment, but Andrew advocated for a subcommittee to represent the GSO in order to establish something more formal than signatures on a letter.

Kristen suggested further discussion and the formation of a subcommittee for divestment.

4. Ben Thompson, Socially Responsible Investment

Ben Thompson, who is currently the graduate student representative for the Advisory Committee of Socially Responsible Investment, addressed the GSO to seek reelection as the representative.

Last year, the Committee approached the Board of Trustees, recommending divestment from firearms. Ultimately, the Board rejected the recommendation, but metrics were established for analyzing future divestment concerns. The Committee seeks not to speak on behalf of the university, unless there is unanimous support.

The following questions were posed to Ben by the GSO representatives:

- Has BU divested before?
 - Yes, South Africa during Apartheid and Darfur.
- What is your position on fossil fuel divestment?
 - Individually, Ben is in favor of fossil fuel divestment, but he stated that it was important not to be committed to a specific response, and instead remains open to discussion.
- How would you make a decision allied with graduate responses?
 - There are a number of methods available: presentations, meet one-on-one, have discussions, open forums, referendums, etc.

Kristen motioned to reelect Ben as the graduate student representative. The motion passed.

5. Digital Humanities Directory

The Digital Humanities Conference discussed at the last meeting last semester is scheduled for Fall 2015. If anyone is interested in being on the planning committee for the conference, contact Kristen Carey.

Kristen requested that the representatives ask members working on digital projects from their departments to submit their research to the directory. The directory is being established to help establish contacts and networks within the growing field and to share knowledge among scholars.

6. Claire Seulgie Lim, African Studies Center Co-Sponsored Event

Claire Seulgie Lim from the Political Science department represented the African Studies Center and its co-sponsored event application for the 23rd Annual African Studies Center Conference, a national interdisciplinary conference hosting members from departments such as history, political science, anthropology, and music.

The event will be held on March 27th and March 28th. There will be 25 presenters, six panels, and 20 - 30 people in attendance. The African Studies Center is asking for \$1000, to cover the keynote speaker (\$250) and to help cover the dinner on Friday (\$1000).

The GSO discussed the distribution of funds, specifically in regards to the honorarium. Kristen motioned to fund the event, on the condition that the funds be used only for the dinner. The motion passed.

7. PE Classes for Graduate Students

Kristen Carey was approached by a graduate student who was no longer enrolled full-time and was unable to take physical education courses at the BU gym without paying tuition fees. The student requested the GSO to help reduce the fee or to get the gym to offer one free course a semester.

The GSO representatives discussed options, such as taking the courses for no credit or auditing. Kristen Carey tabled this agenda item until further information becomes available.