

Boston University Graduate and Professional Leadership Council

Minutes

Monday, September 21, 2015
5:30PM – ERB 203 (44 Cummington Mall)

1. Introduction

Lauren Mangano (ENG, executive board member) began the meeting. Current additional executive board members:

- Kira Sullivan-Wiley, GRS
- Carl Ceraolo, GMS
- Clark Yin, GMS

GPLC connects graduate students from different colleges to make policy changes. This allows students to have a more unified voice to get changes done. Examples of previously resolved issues include mental health services on the medical campus and BU shuttle service to the medical campus on Saturdays.

2. Previous Issues

- **Commonwealth Avenue reconstruction (Michelle Divelbiss, GMS)**

Reconstruction has been proposed to take place on Commonwealth Avenue. A committee was formed last spring and led by Matthew Danish. The Comm. Ave. Reconstruction Committee is the voice of BU graduate students regarding the reconstruction that is happening. Motion was made to continue on with the committee. Michelle Divelbiss (midiv@bu.edu) volunteered to take over this committee.

- **Debit/credit cards at BU dining facilities**

Lots of non-BU on and BU dining around campus do not accept debit and credit cards. An example is Chequer's in the basement of the main medical school building. This is a committee with no one running it right now. Largest complaint was that it is very inconvenient. There was a discussion about whether this was an issue on campus besides GSU (answer was yes). One issue would be that if businesses added debit and credit card capabilities, then prices may go up. Nominated to be a committee (6 out of 11 so pass!). **Omar (law)** will chair this and open it up to his community. He may have people sit on this committee on behalf of the law school.

- **Ph.D. funding model**

This issue was introduced spring of 2014, and is regarding limited funding for current Ph.D. students who were admitted prior to the institution of the "guaranteed 5-year funding model," and the funding discrepancy that has developed between these students and older students who are not guaranteed funding. Tommy (from April 2015 meeting) believes that it should potentially be resolved. He explored the prevalence of this issue among other Ph.D. students and found that this problem seems to be unique to GRS students and there is little interest in pursuing this issue. The math department came up with a department-specific resolution, but this is still a problem for other departments such as history, and theology. There was a motion to combine this with the Ph.D. External Funding Issue.

Motion passed. Andrew Henry (GRS) is the new chair, and JP Horn (Social Work) is interested in helping.

- **Student ID Replacement Fee**

If you lose an ID you have to pay 40 bucks to replace it. Natalie's student fee was not waived at first because of a complication regarding her status as a graduate student. She went to the Dean of Students, the Ombudsman, and finally got to the person who waived her fee. He stated that he is not reviewing the policy, but reviews cases on an individual basis. The goal is to get this policy removed. Nominated to exist as a committee. Natalie to chair the committee.

- **Auditing FitRec Classes**

From April's meeting: the issue is related to the limits on the number of course a graduate student can audit, and the effect this has on taking certain courses at FitRec. Once graduate courses are completed, there is a limit of one audit per course. Many courses at FitRec are not available for punch cards, only for credit, and thus not available to graduate students unless they register as a full time student which is very expensive. A discussion erupted with varying stories. Jimmy said he talked to someone at FitRec, and they were going to allow him to take Tae Kwon Do without having to pay the full-tuition price (it is a for-credit class). JP said that his department pays for his sailing class. Kira mentioned that her dance class was dropped because her department refused to pay.

Before moving forward with the survey, let's get more information from FitRec and ask them to clarify their policy. We can put this on the GPLC website. Committee stays. Chair is Kristen Carey. Clark is helping.

3. New Issues

- **FitRec Membership for BU Alumni (e-mail from Hao Chen)**

It is about 15 dollars per visit. There is a young alumni membership. Perhaps this may be a resolved issue. If you go monthly, they are paying about 50 dollars a month just to go a few times. Perhaps, if there is a young alumni membership this might be a resolution.

From their website: they have an alumni price that is 64 dollars a month. If you graduated within two years, you are eligible for the young alumni which is 40% off 64 dollars. There is also a "Friends of BU Membership". Motion to share this information on the website. Passed.

- **Dental plan (Presented by Jimmy Chau, ENG)**

This issue has come up in previous meetings. For the rest of the students, we have to pay out of pocket for dental work. Previously the dental school offered a dental plan for \$300 a year and can get routine stuff done. But recently they make you pay for everything and only give you a 10% discount. Some of the student governments had talked about getting improvements, and there was talk of adding overhead to the grants that we were already getting to get this covered.

Update from the previous Dental Insurance Committee: they were formed in the last meeting in April 2015. They were formed to gather more information on the available options for dental. There is a basic health plan that does not cover dental, but for vision there is a number we can call. You can get discounted vision. For the dental plan, there is a student discount program which is only 10% off the full price. Another part of the dental plan aside from the 10%, on your first visit, you receive the full series of X-rays for no charge. Seems worth advocating for at a least a supplemental plan.

Motion to form a committee passed. Recommend pursuing student health services as an adoption. Recommend collaborating with previous dental/vision committee.

Co-Chairs: Jimmy Chau (ENG) and Kanwal Haq (GMS)

Mary McClintock, Taylor Moore-Willis, and Kelsi Carolan would like to be on the committee to help.

- **External Funding for Ph.D. (e-mail from Monica Rey)**

Note: This was combined with the Ph.D. Funding Model Committee.

In the religion department, if you are on a fellowship and get an adjunct position outside of BU, or if BU asks you to teach a course, you are not allowed to be paid above your stipend for that. It is a discouragement towards getting other employment. This creates problems for various departments such as the School of Social Work and the Religion department. What happens is, students will take on jobs and just not tell their departments. Tim Barbari is rolling out a new school-wide Ph.D. funding model soon.

Motion to combine with Ph.D. Funding Model Committee passed.

4. New Executive Board

We are looking for two new executive board members. Duties include organizing the open meetings, coordinating the subcommittees that are formed, public awareness of the group. The main responsibilities are usually compressed around big meetings.

Taylor Moore-Willis was nominated.

We will send out an email blast letting graduate students know a position is open. Joanna from Questrom brought the issue up that presidents from the various schools should be required, or at least send a representative to come to these meetings. She will bring this up with her school's council.

5. Meeting was adjourned