

# BU GSO – General Body Meeting

## Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 7, 2022

Time: 6:00 pm

### I. Welcoming remarks by the President

- a. Join Slack Channel for GSO Reps:  
[https://join.slack.com/t/bugso2021/shared\\_invite/ztobqpc210-gxJTsxWWkWL7n4ioaAfkiw](https://join.slack.com/t/bugso2021/shared_invite/ztobqpc210-gxJTsxWWkWL7n4ioaAfkiw)
- b. Join the GSO mailing list: <https://www.bu.edu/gso/join-our-mailing-list/>

### II. E-board Reports (10 mins)

#### a. President's Report

1. Description of Department Representative roles
2. Reports on Meetings
  - i. Meeting with Undergraduate Student Government
  - ii. Meeting with GRS Representative – rebuilding GSO membership and awareness
  - iii. Meeting with Dean Jeffries
  - iv. Meeting with Associate Provost Kleinman
  - v. Meeting with Sasha from the Prof Dev and Post-Doc Affairs Office
3. Working to schedule a data science workshop
4. Upcoming meetings with Mayor and City Council Members

#### b. VP's Report

1. Description of the Proxy System (email monan@bu.edu)
2. Report on meetings –
  - i. Boston Grad Federation (1/27/2022)
    1. Unified graduate student government – Tufts has one for main campus (not med school), MIT has one but also uses it to fund student and departmental organizations
    2. Supporting local/small businesses in event planning – MIT's DEI Committee has been discussing but no firm plans yet
    3. Housing survey – getting ready to be sent out in coming months
3. Working to schedule a professional development event
4. Investigating feasibility of providing shuttle service for new graduate students
  - i. Feedback from body: International reps think would've been helpful on arriving in Boston. Potential for expanding to include a "buddy system" to

welcome new students. Questions about how BU might support funding and how fits with existing BU and MBTA systems

ii. Tabled for future discussion

**c. Treasurer's Report**

1. Working with GRS contact (Janette Countryman) to make sure that reimbursement requests from PhD students will be processed
2. Working with Stan to handle reimbursements for the upcoming international students' tax webinar
3. Working with Stan to reschedule domestic students' tax webinar

**d. Secretary's Report**

1. Working on PhD Student Grant Petition - in November, GSO decided to move forward with creating a petition but holidays/Eboard transition interfered
2. [Link](#) to draft text
3. Questions: Timing? Is this still impactful? Suggestions on text edits; Distribution - format and sharing (maybe Google form like recent COVID petitions)
4. Feedback from Reps: Yes, feel still impactful and important to pursue. Looking at text, want to make language stronger.
5. **Next steps:** Reps will make suggestions on text and GSO will revisit and vote on at next general body meeting

**e. Social Chair Report**

1. Upcoming GSO Pub Night
2. Upcoming social event – maybe coffee chat or something similar

**f. International Student Relations Chair Report**

1. International Tax Webinar (February 1) went very well. Robert Underwood, CPA ([runder@rcn.com](mailto:runder@rcn.com)) is presenter
2. Domestic Tax Webinar is being rescheduled
  - i. Reps' preferred days (in chat): M (5); T (3); W (3); Th (2); F (4)

**g. Travel Grants Chair Report**

1. The next grant deadline is: April 1st, 2022 at 11:59PM EST. Applications must be emailed as a word document to the GSO at [gsogrant@bu.edu](mailto:gsogrant@bu.edu)
2. To qualify for a grant, your trip must begin **after** the application deadline date and occur within the year of receiving the award. For example, if a doctoral student is notified on April 14th 2019 that they have received a grant, they have until April 14th 2020 to use it.
3. Looking for people to help serve on grant review committee (email [gsogrant@bu.edu](mailto:gsogrant@bu.edu)). Reviewers can still receive grants.

**III. Guest Speaker: Angela Seliga from the Diversity & Inclusion Action Team (6:30)**

- a. Angela is an alumna of the Biology Department and former GSO Representative, co-founder of GWISE and current member of the Advisory Board, co-advisor of the CAS Diversity and Inclusion Action Team (created in response to undergraduates asking BU to act on DEI)
- b. Seeking students to apply to be a CAS D&I Student Council Representative:
  1. Both Undergraduate and Graduate Councils. Graduate Student Council has 6-8 representatives, meets once a month, helps administer/award competitive student grants for student-initiated DEI projects
  2. If you are interested in serving, please fill out the application form <https://forms.office.com/r/XKuGp1grgg> to be considered. Applications are still open (website may say deadline was Friday, February 4).
  3. Please contact Angela Seliga ([amseliga@bu.edu](mailto:amseliga@bu.edu)) for questions.

#### IV. Old Business (15 minutes)

- a. Follow-up on COVID Special Session (1/17)
  1. Letter sent to BU Admin on January 18<sup>th</sup>; response Received January 21; GSO public statement issued on January 24th
  2. For more information on the action of students in SPH: [Story HERE](#)
  3. What's next?
    - i. Administration unlikely to budge on contact tracing, LfA for all instructors
    - ii. Recent sick leave policy addresses some of concerns for graduate students who receive a positive test
    - iii. Reps: Feel most important issue is accommodation for high-risk students or those living with high-risk individuals. Maybe check with lecturers' union to see how they are handling
    - iv. **Next steps:** Since letter from Provost unclear as to exactly what accommodations exist for high-risk individuals, GSO will request clarification/specification
    - v. **Vote:** Should GSO formally respond to Provost's letter and request specification? Yes (23/28). Passed.
- b. Follow-up on E-Board Compensation
  1. Potentially compensating E-board members raised in Fall of 2021.
  2. Purpose: to encourage interest in pursuing an E-board position and to encourage dedication to position once elected
  3. GRS has indicated that we could provide non-service stipends for E-board members.
  4. Proposed structure (for 1 full year of service):
    - i. President: \$1000
    - ii. VP, Secretary, Treasurer: \$750
    - iii. ICR Chair, Social Chair, Travel Grants Chair: \$500
  5. Questions/Concerns from reps:

- i. When would this go into effect? What are the optics of current E-Board voting to compensate selves? Potential solution would be for funding to not go into effect until FY2023-24.
  - ii. How does this compare to other schools in area?
    1. Other schools in Boston grad school federation use an hourly rate structure, paying students for administrative work
6. **Next steps:** Tabled for next meeting.

#### V. New Business (15 minutes)

- a. Forming Committees – tabled for next meeting
- b. Opening Organization Membership
  1. GSO initially started when GRS was the only graduate school. Historically, we have welcomed students from other colleges in the university. However, we are unable to fund or offer voting rights to non-GRS students
  2. President has met with Provost Kleinman and Dean Jeffries about the possibility of opening our organization to be university wide.
  3. Questions/concerns from reps:
    - i. Would this merge with other graduate student organizations (departmental, for example)? No, this would still be student government, not a social/discipline organization
    - ii. How would the budget change? It would come from Provost office instead of GRS
  4. **Vote:** Should GSO pursue developing a unified graduate student government? Yes (19/23), Abstain (1 – request more information on history and structure of GSO)
- c. Organization Name Change – tabled. Will go along with opening organization membership discussion.
- d. Student Parking Concerns – tabled.
- e. Recommendations for Spring Programming – tabled.
- f. Upcoming graduate student events:
  1. SARP Right Way to Swipe Right Event: BU Pub Feb. 17, free appetizers and drink tickets. Email Katie Haupt ([khaupt@bu.edu](mailto:khaupt@bu.edu)) with questions
  2. PhD Student Film Club – semester theme is history of labor. First film is Friday 2/11 at 6pm, *Pride* (2014). Streaming and discussion facilitated by Noa Saunders

(PhD candidate in English) on Discord: [tinyurl.com/noa-discord](https://tinyurl.com/noa-discord). Email her at [noars@bu.edu](mailto:noars@bu.edu)

VII. Closing:

- a. Contact the GSO at [gso@bu.edu](mailto:gso@bu.edu)
- b. Contact GSO president, Arcadia, at [aewell1@bu.edu](mailto:aewell1@bu.edu)
- c. [Schedule a private meeting with Arcadia](#)