

GSA General Assembly Meeting

2/25/15

Meeting Start – 7:04 PM

- I. Approval of Minutes
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Department Meeting Reports
 - a. Religious Studies (Janna Gonwa and Zachary Smith)
 - i. T&S
 1. Better signage for shuttle stops
 2. Better matching between signs, the actual location of a stop, and the app.
 3. Orange line during the day without breaks?
 4. Arrival times accurately reflect the stop points of the shuttles.
 5. Westville – subsidized buses?
 - ii. TF issues
 1. Pay scale clarity.
 2. Student was left off the list – did not receive teaching during teaching year.
 3. Pay drop worries – feeding into national issues with adjunct faculty pay.
 - iii. Funding issues
 1. First pay check delay means a hard transition for graduate students
 - a. Could we move up first pay cut date?
 - b. Give an extra bump for the first pay cut?
 2. Department doesn't offer enough money to visit campus.
 - a. \$100-200 doesn't even pay for plane ticket.
 3. More conference travel money – need it for job interviews.
 - iv. Health
 1. Not satisfied with dental and vision plans.
 2. Spousal availability for dental/vision.
 - v. Napping security guard in department space.
 - vi. OCS doesn't have anything for them – academic job oriented.
 - b. MB&B (Brian Dunican and Chenxiang Tang)
 - i. Meeting held a while ago.
 - ii. Fairly positive about experiences at Yale.
 - iii. Answering recent changes questions – TF, OCS, etc.
 - iv. Explaining GSA programs - Common Grounds.
 - v. Dental and Eye care complaint.
 1. Limitation and costs associated with fillings and other dental care.
 - vi. Department issues.
 1. How long it takes to graduate?
 2. Faculty issues?
 - vii. Comment
 1. Subsidizing for public buses would be good – Emilio.

- a. (Wendy) Janet Lindner (Deputy Vice President for Human Resources and Administration) – not Yale’s plan.
 - b. Won’t provide bus passes for the city buses.
 - c. Yale transit is for transporting around Yale.
 - d. Brian Dunican – How many of you would use the city bus system if subsidized?
 - i. About 40% would use city buses.
- viii. Engineering (Aaron Morris)
 - 1. Day lockers are too small at the gym.
 - a. Was suggested that they could rent larger locker for the semester.
 - b. Too expensive.
 - 2. Civil and Environmental engineering
 - a. Mason Laboratory – Very old building.
 - b. Problem with recruitment – dissuades recruits.
 - c. Hazard with electrical outlets/extension cords – smoking.
 - i. Called facilities but they claim setup is wrong.
 - d. Thefts in the building.
 - e. Locks were broken all the time for long time.
 - 3. HGS doesn’t have meal plan on weekends.
 - a. Must go to undergrads’ dining hall.
 - b. Don’t have card access to the dining hall.
 - c. Would also like access for safety reasons.
 - 4. McDougal Center – not open all the time.
 - a. Unfair since undergrads have very similar areas that are open all the time.
 - 5. Can’t teach outside the requirements.
 - a. No incentives for PIs to let you.
 - b. Thus, can’t get more experience for the job market.
 - 6. Worried about beds in HGS after renovations.
 - 7. Comments
 - a. Beds in HGS.
 - i. Plan is to cover all beds through swing space.
 - b. Buzzer in undergrads.
 - i. Will let you in if you press it and let them know why you are there.
 - ii. Not sure when the guard is there.
- ix. Astronomy (Joey Schmitt)
 - 1. Yale should withhold all taxes.
 - a. W2 should be for all income.
 - 2. No official policy on how graduation and thesis process work.
 - 3. Delta Dental – safety net for costly procedures, instead of for cleanings.
 - 4. Unclear process on how to create student organizations, especially those that contain both undergrads and graduate students.
 - 5. Comments

- a. Does anyone know why it's legal to not withhold taxes?
 - i. We are not employees, thus they don't need to.
 - ii. During teaching, that portion is withheld.
 - b. You can withhold some taxes through the w4. Could someone who knows how to do it show someone/write something up?
 - i. Chris will write it up.
- x. Anthropology (Amanda Leiss and Kendall Arslanian)
 - 1. More info on what is offered by OCS – Amanda will provide.
 - 2. Classes training are helpful as far as actually teaching goes but would be nice learn more about the logistics of teaching.
 - a. Better understanding on how to reserve rooms.
 - b. Better understanding for capping sections.
 - c. Large learning curve for students not familiar with undergrad colleges.
 - 3. More accountability for faculty regarding responsibilities.
 - a. Have students sign off saying they understand the responsibilities laid out for specific TF positions.
 - b. Students would also like someone outside the department if they feel overburdened.
 - 4. 6th year funding – doesn't help as currently written (6th year funding), would be better as terminal year funding.
 - 5. T&S
 - a. Feel safe biking.
 - b. One student's bike wheel was stolen from HGS courtyard.
 - c. More Red lines – increase frequency or the size of buses.
 - 6. Health
 - a. Cover mental health counselors outside of Yale to ease burden on Yale Mental Health and improve anonymity.
 - b. 20% copay on cavities is high, expensive.
 - c. Can't order contacts online, so vision plan doesn't save much money.
 - d. Would be better to have multiple levels of coverage.
 - e. Ranked lists of closest and ranking for dentists and vision.
 - 7. Facilities
 - a. 24-hour non-departmental space not a concern.
 - b. Departmental office space is a concern – dependent on advisor for some departments.
 - c. Lots of gym concerns.
 - i. Extend gym hours on the weekend and Friday.
 - ii. Classes and trainers should be free
 - iii. Should be allowed to play racquetball in the squash courts.
 - iv. Improve class registration system.
 - v. Better spinning bikes.

8. HGS updates
 - a. Game room.
 - b. More common space.
 - c. More air conditioning.
9. Tax Facts – can the accountant just give a direct explanation for how to do taxes?
10. CTF provide comments with rejections?
11. Comments
 - a. Tax Facts
 - i. Liability is an issue with that.
- xi. Italian (Karen Raizen)
 1. Major issue – Teaching
 - a. 4 semesters of teaching language instructions.
 - i. 5 days a week for 1st 3 semesters.
 - ii. More than 20 hours a week.
 - iii. Class size is growing.
 - iv. 15-19 students per class currently.
 - v. Worried about 2 colleges opening – class sizes are already large and time burden is difficult.
 - b. Crisis last year – lost the language coordinator.
 - i. Not job security for current faculty running it.
 - ii. Need this position to organize.
 2. T&S
 - a. Better shuttle service to Wooster square.
 - b. Ice on the bridge to Wooster Square.
 - c. Swipe access to the colleges.
 3. Mental Health
 - a. Wanted access to outside counselors.
 - b. Better out of town coverage.
 - c. Definition of emergency – charged a lot of money because acute care could have handled it.
 4. 24 hour space would be great.
 5. Bluedog cafe opens 3 weeks after the semester starts – would be nice for it to open earlier.
 6. More LGBT activities that are not yoga based.
 7. Comments
 - a. Seeclifix
 - i. Report it to New Haven.
 - b. Yale swing and blues club open to LGBT.

IV. Elections

- a. Task Force on Out-of-Area Healthcare Coverage.
 - i. Determine the feasibility of out-of-area coverage.
 - ii. Determine expectations of Yale Health to coverage.
 - iii. Pricing of insurance alternatives.
 - iv. Two representatives.
 - v. 1st meeting in the 1st week of April.

- vi. Nominations
 - 1. Ryan Kasak – Linguistics.
 - 2. Kendall Arslanian – Anthropology.
 - vii. Approval.
 - 1. Ryan Kasak – Approved by acclamation.
 - 2. Kendall Arslanian – Approved by acclamation.
 - b. Campus-wide Ad Hoc Committee to consider a possible change of Yale's Learning Management System (LMS).
 - i. Pilot to see if they'd like to move to another system – Canvas.
 - ii. Design Pilot project to study this.
 - iii. Make recommendations.
 - iv. 3 meetings.
 - 1. Spring this year to spring next year.
 - v. Nominations
 - 1. Ankit Disa – Physics.
 - vi. Approval.
 - 1. Approved by acclamation
- V. Resolutions
- a. S15-003: Equitability in the 6th-Year Funding Policy
 - i. 6 years of Yale-based funding.
 - ii. Draft a report by the end of the semester.
 - 1. Student opinions.
 - 2. Draft recommendations for administration.
 - iii. Questions
 - 1. APD?
 - a. Academics and Professional Development.
 - b. It's defined earlier in the resolution.
 - 2. Clarification regarding the old system? What do fellowships do to the number of years of funding?
 - a. Only through 6th year, can't get 7th year funding.
 - b. Less of an incentive to apply.
 - 3. Why are we asking for the right to petition?
 - a. Wanted to process to resemble the way the funding system will be set up.
 - b. Would allow the same process for 6th years with a fellowship.
 - iv. Comments
 - 1. Patrick – Would they be able to afford this program? What is the point of doing this?
 - a. Raising this as an issue.
 - b. Showing that we support this.
 - c. Clarify to the administration and the graduate student body what our official position is.
 - d. Students want this, so we should reflect their wishes.
 - v. Approval
 - 1. Clicker issues – voting done by hand. Resolution passed.

- a. Yes – 35
 - b. No – 10
 - c. Abstain – 3
- b. S15-004: Delaying the 7th Year Funding Decrease
 - i. Pay cut affects current students that will not benefit from the new system.
 - ii. Proposing a delay for one year in the pay decrease for teaching fellows.
 - iii. Allows students the chance to plan.
 - iv. Questions
 - 1. Just for current 6th years?
 - a. Yes.
 - 2. How many 6th year students are we discussing?
 - a. We aren't certain.
 - 3. Patrick – Can you explain the 3rd paragraph?
 - a. When Dean Pamela Schirmeister spoke with us, she mentioned the position of the graduate school on the purpose of 6th year funding and teaching.
 - b. Enhanced development is a main goal.
 - c. Going along with the ideas that the graduate school is proposing.
 - 4. What the plans are? When will they be enacted?
 - a. Uncertain.
 - 5. Which science departments does this funding affect?
 - a. Geology/Geophysics for one.
 - b. What was said in the [FAQs](#) – It is true that this will not affect a substantial portion of the science departments.
 - c. We are looking into it who it would affect.
 - d. Biomedical engineering
 - i. Almost every professor elects to continue
 - v. Discussion
 - 1. Patrick – 2nd paragraph – reads as though we are receiving a \$16,000 pay cut.
 - a. Amend to “receiving just...”
 - 2. Delete departments that are examples.
 - a. Stronger statement without the examples.
 - 3. Strike “the” in first clause.
 - 4. Strike entire 3rd paragraph - Zach
 - a. Don't need to kowtow with the administration.
 - b. Uses universities arguments.
 - c. We would be adopting it as a resolution.
 - d. Address the new program in some way – Brian
 - e. Amend – strike the expedited time to degree?
 - f. Decided to strike entire paragraph.
 - 5. Patrick – Add new phrase “whereas
 - 6. Vote on resolution amendment
 - a. By hands – yeses have it
 - vi. Vote on Resolution

1. By hands – resolution passes
 - c. S15-005: Creating an ad hoc Committee to evaluate and revise the Conference Travel Fellowship
 - i. Due to the discussion at the deep dive during our previous meeting, creating ad hoc committee.
 - ii. Comments
 1. Does the transparency and efficiency limit the power of the committee?
 - a. No, the CTF director essentially has complete control already.
 - iii. Discussion
 1. Great idea – move to vote
 - iv. Approval
 1. Ayes have it acclamation.
- VI. GSA Charter
- a. Every 4 years, update the GSA Charter.
 - i. Agreement that we have with the graduate school.
 - ii. Forces them to meet with us.
 - iii. Purposely left pretty vague.
 - b. Going to propose amendments next week. (2a/b)
 - i. Would like to update list of university wide and grad school specific committees.
 1. Would like to prevent cherry picking of representatives.
 2. Put in language to have them ask us for representatives.
 - c. Faculty has to vote on it.
 - d. Will be meeting with the executive committee of the graduate school.
 - e. Do we know who the faculty on the Executive committee are?
 - i. Yes, they are known.
 - f. We have to do a referendum for both students and faculty.
 - g. We must settle on something that we can both agree on.
 - h. Please email us or bring them to the next meeting.
 - i. Should we change charter every year?
 - i. We can force a vote by 2/3 majority from the general assembly if we wish.
- VII. Announcements/Comments from the floor
- a. Sciences – 6th year funding issues.
 - i. Public
 1. Dependent on the parts of public health you receive funding from.
 2. Some faculty/advisor cannot fund.
 - ii. Computational Biology and Bioinformatics
 1. Single case of collaborator having to fund a student.

Meeting adjourned – 8:13 PM