

GC Minutes (09/12/2016)

Present Departments (26): Anthropology, Applied Mathematics & Statistics, Art History, Biology, Biophysics, Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering, Civil Engineering, Classics, Cognitive Science, Computer Science, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Engineering Management, Environmental Health and Engineering, EPS, GRLL, History, History of Science and Technology, Humanities Center, ISI, Mathematics, Mechanical Engineering, Near Eastern Studies, Philosophy, Physics and Astronomy, Psychological and Brain Sciences, Sociology

Present E-Board Members (9): Chair, Co-Chair, Admin & Funding, Social (2), Advocacy (Damini), Communications (Ravi), Health Concerns, Professional Development

Welcome: Ian Miers, Chair of the GRO

Approval of Minutes (05/09/2016): motion to approve the minutes from 05/09/2016, motion carries: minutes approved.

Funding Requests: General Information

\$ 15-17,000 available in the budget; explanation of basic rules; question: "Do you normally use the entire budget?" "No. Groups don't necessarily submit receipts."

Chair attempts to streamline dealing with funding request in order to have more time for other issues.

Funding Request 1: Capoeira Club - Lessons for the Student Community  
No discussion; motion to fully fund, second; motion carries: funding approved.

Funding Request 2: Indian Graduate Student Association - Freshers Night

No discussion; motion to fully fund, second; motion carries: funding approved.

Funding Request 3: VERSUS Confernece (GRLL)

No discussion; motion to fully fund, second; motion carries: funding approved.

Funding Request 4: Chinese-speaking Christian Fellowship - Welcoming Event

Group representative was asked to give a speech

Discussion: one GC rep raised the point that the GRO shouldn't fund religious groups on principle; another GC rep said that it is unfair that only one group leader was asked to speak while the others didn't have to present their event; further point of discussion: the previous form of presenting funding requests should be re-established, not

moving forward too fast.

Motion to fully fund, second; motion carries: funding approved.

Elections for E-Board Positions

Co-Chair

Candidate: Linda Braun (History)

Vote: 26 (YES) – 0 (NO) – 0 (ABSTAIN)

Secretary

No candidate

Social Chair:

Candidate: Elmer Zapata Mercado (Biophysics)

Vote: 26 (YES) – 0 (NO) – 0 (ABSTAIN)

GRO Guide Chair

No candidate

Discussion: What issues the GRO should tackle this year and what issues the GRO actually can solve:

- Chair: looking for things we can practically achieve; trying to get better health care is admirable but odds are not in our favor
- plan to remodel the library, talk about grad student study space; bring up: be involved in planning
- health insurance hard to achieve but emphasize: History of Medicine better situation; also happens in Biophysics, BME, Biology
- improving medical leave of absence: no information, lost medical insurance; never received enough information
- NLRB ruling: talk about that in order to push for our goals
- more professional development within earlier stage of graduate school; coursework oriented among professional development; fund within dean's office to hire specialists to come to department
- advocate for breast pumping rooms

Discussion: Unionization

Chair presents the context of the NLRB decision and gives overview of the unionization process (rules)

- Questions from GC: What is the GRO's role in this? Is anybody else trying to unionize here? Is that group represented here? Why need a separate group? Why can't it be done within the GRO?
- GRO is funded by administration; inequality of representation within the GRO; getting a rep from that group to talk to us
- TRU: meetings are open to anybody (e.g. like meeting with AFT)
- Questions from GC: Can we get more money from administration if we promise not to unionize? Can administration use GRO to mobilize people not to unionize?
- statement against unionization because strike would be necessary;

other opinion: not always necessary to go on strike; bargaining struggle is also likely

- suggestion from GC: take poll of student body in order to figure out how many people would unionize and how many would be against it;

comment: low response rate to surveys

- suggestion: have town hall meeting about unionization; same goes for other topics like health care and such

- suggestion: run a committee that collects information about unionization

Floating Chairs:

- next meeting: pick positions of four Floating Chairs (belong to E-Board); meeting after that: elections of Floating Chairs

- think about issues raised today and connect to ideas about positions

- send list of past floating chairs to GC