The University of Maine

GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT (GSG)
Minutes of the GSG Board Meeting, February 25, 2010

In Attendance:

Department Representatives:
P. Bates        D. Belanger        A. Burke        D. Cassidy        E. Desroberts
K. Garland      P. Heacock        L. Holleb       J. Kastelein      J. Killarney
A. Kristo       D. Laliberté      B. Looze        L. Matheson       E. McCarthy
J. Moulton      N. Nadeau         K. Pingree      A. Potter*        A. Prang
R. Rioux        M. Royer          C. Salm         A. Speers         K. Stewart
M. Strouse

Proxies:
*K. Minott

Executive Committee:
P. Spinney       J. Bolton         J. Beaupre      T. Smith         C. Mahaffey       J. Scott-Pollock

Graduate School:
D. Sandweiss     S. Delcourt

Guests:
J. Poirier

Meeting called to order at 12:33 pm.

Expo submissions due 28 in minutes but 26 online.

Cassidy/Laliberte Motion to Approve Minutes from 2/11/10
Passes (22 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 abstentions)

President’s Report – Pat

Officer Elections
We will call for officer nominations at the next meeting, March 18
Elections Will be held on April 1

Health Insurance Committee
As of yesterday we had not received an officially quote from the insurance company
We will have all the information by the next meeting (3/18/10) including the effect of
combining the coverage for the wellness benefit and the dental care.
Social Committee
The mixer on 2/19 went well. It included a live band and continued into the night.
Pictures will be uploaded to the website.
The next social will be on either 3/19 or 3/26. The biggest consideration is whether to hold it in Stodder or off-campus (The Dime, Jason’s, Old Town bowling alley). We are also considering whether or not to include a theme (trivia, 70’s/80’s, etc.)
The Roost (formerly Sports Café) in Orono is not interested in hosting us on Thursday or Friday nights
Thoughts and ideas should be sent to Patrick Spinney or Jason Bolton via FirstClass.

Grad Board Update
There has been a request from student representatives at the Board of Trustees meeting to publish a record of the frequency with which each course at each campus is offered. This record would probably be in the MaineStreet system.
The Grad Board is considering changing the policy regarding the grading of thesis credits. In the current system thesis credits are graded as “R” (deferred), “L” (stopped attending), or “F” (failed). The “R” grades do not contribute to GPA calculations and become “ACC” (accepted) upon completion of the thesis. The “L” and “F” grades both contribute as failing grades to the GPA. The proposition is to include a “U” (unsatisfactory) option that would not contribute to GPA calculations but would indicate that the student did not complete the expected work during a semester. These grades would mostly be used when a student transfers from a degree that requires a thesis to a non-thesis degree. The “R” grades may contribute to the non-thesis requirements, but the “U” grades would not. The benefit of this policy is that unsatisfactory progress would impact GPA. The down side is that faculty may be more likely to give “U” than “F” or “L” because of that. This policy is still being discussed, and will probably be decided at the next meeting.

Vice President’s Report – Jason
Expo Update
Finances are looking good. I am waiting to hear from the Dean of the College of Engineering and the Business School. The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences has donated money. We are looking for judges for the Expo in the next few weeks (20-30 desired). So far we have 15 submissions of abstracts. They are due tomorrow.

Faculty Senate Service & Outreach Committee
The GSG philanthropy committee will be “volunteered” to form a focus group on how service and outreach have helped students at UMaine.

Grant Officers Report – Christie
Grants Update
Submission process was quite smooth. We received 116 applications (70 in Travel to Present, 46 in Degree Related) compared to 84 last Spring. Applications increased in both categories. Files will be distributed to the readers tonight.
Board of Trustees (BOT) – Julie-Ann

Mentor Award
Applications are due tomorrow (2/26/10) at 4:00 pm.
We have not received many yet.

BOT Update
The USM graduate student government is now up and running.

Graduate Teaching Assistant Support
There will be a GTA support network meeting tonight. It will be a conversation between aspiring instructors, current instructors, and those who are finishing their instructing days. It is a good time to meet other grad students from around campus. There will be pizza.

Secretary’s Report – Trevor

Faculty Senate Meeting
President Kennedy’s office has sponsored an initiative to make UMaine a tobacco-free campus. He announced at the Faculty Senate meeting that this policy will be enacted starting January 1, 2011.

Academic Program Prioritization Working Group
APPWG is a group of faculty and administrators whose task is to develop criteria to determine which programs should be prioritized in light of the drastic budget cuts that need to be made within the next four years. APPWG will hold a public forum on Monday March 29, 2010 from 1:00 – 4:00 pm in the Wells Conference Center. This is an opportunity for faculty and students to speak with the Deans of each of the colleges and the members of APPWG about the proposed policies and specific programs. The format of the forum will be five small tables (one for each college) with representatives for each of the colleges stationed at the table. Those interested in participating should feel free to come and go at any time during the forum. A preliminary report outlining the initial decisions of APPWG will be made publicly available approximately one week before the public forum.

Treasurer’s Report – James
The Financial Review cost less than expected ($2200 instead of the expected $2800 or the budgeted $2700)

New Business
Dean Sandweiss: The administration at UMaine is being very supportive of graduate education. They are committed to maintaining the number of teaching assistantships offered and are trying to increase the stipend levels across campus.

Meeting adjourned at 1:17