



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

THIRTY-SECOND CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

Assembly Meeting

April 15, 2024

6:30pm

Minutes

Call to Order: 6:40pm

Pledge of Allegiance: Rep. Medarev

Roll Call: Alleyne, Balak, Balogun, Barber, Bethke, Burns, Delva, Eburara, Galeano, Hussain, McCraney, Medarev, Nord, Pakdehi, Rogowski, Rowan, Schumm, Siegel, Vaughn, Wardlow, Wheeler,

Absent Excused: Cyrille, Solmaz, Strickland, Wesner

Absent Unexcused: Fermin, Velez

Reading and approval of the Minutes: Rep. Medarev; 2nd - Rogowski

Petitions into the Assembly: N/A

Special Introductions and Student Comments:

GAU Speaker - Joe

GAU is the Union that represents Graduate Assistants at FSU. Florida is trying to get rid of all of the Unions in the state. We need to have 60% of all graduate assistants to be fee paying members. We don't have that, so we are gathering 40% petitions to get certified for one more year. We have reached the goal to be good for another year. After that we don't know if we can do the card campaign next year, but we are working to get to the 60% dues paying member amount. Please reach out to us on social media on how to become a dues paying member. We hope to have a relationship with COGS moving forward. Please sign up and if you are interested in getting involved, we need volunteers to help out. We want as many people involved as possible. We have a bowling social from now until 9:45pm, so please come down to bowling and to get some drinks on us at Proof. The benefits of joining are to preserve the Union and we cut the card campaign a little close this year. We also host various socials and you get access to a free attorney if you have issues with your graduate assistant workspace. You also get access to another attorney for lease disputes, etc. Worked to get Christmas bonuses and 5% raises for graduate students. Also access to a grievance officer.

Q&A: Bethke - What kind of outreach do you have?

This is a challenge due to membership turnover. FSU also does not provide us a list of potential members which means it is hard to get the word out to graduate students. We are trying to go door to door and that doesn't always work because students don't always go to their offices. Our current plan is to create department reps to help spread the word. We need peers to reach out to the students who are dissertating.

Hussain - What about the interest cards?

If you would like to sign an interest card, it's better to have more than less.

Instagram is FSUGAU.

Messages from Student Government:

Madeline King, Student Body Treasurer - Hello. I am here to see the budget and please reach out if you need anything.

Speaker: Motion to suspend rule 3.5 - Schumm; Balogun - 2nd

Report from the Office of Governmental Affairs:

Report of Officers:

- Report of the Speaker: Congrats to making it to the end of spring. The big thing I have for tonight is something that wasn't able to make it to Internal Affairs. We are working to improve the relationship with SGA. I've met with SGA officers about making changes. We have put together a framework based on what we talked about at the retreat. I would like to bring it up for consideration in new business if it is okay with the congress. This should give COGS the power to represent graduate students on campus and should also protect the power of COGS. Would anyone be opposed to this being brought up in new business? No. We will also have nominations for Deputy Speaker for Finance and we are looking for someone for the summer.
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Finance: We have a lot tonight with the budget. The funding report is attached. We need to put in more funds to the presentation grants and that should be all for this financial period. There is a document attached in the email with the full budget to look at during deliberations.
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Communications: Frother's daughter setup help - April 25th from 10-12pm; Shoutout to African Graduate Student Association - Mores Award; Please fill out the summer schedule form; We have t-shirts to give to everyone - Thank you Taylor for working on those.
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs: I hope that we can work to fill out seats in COGS. We want to have petitions over the summer and this upcoming fall semester. Try to spread the word out in your departments and with your friends.
- Advisor Announcements: None

Committee Introductions and Reports:

- Internal Affairs: We didn't have an official meeting because of quorum, but we will talk about the new resolution in new business.
- Student Advocacy: Met on April 8th and discussed the Qualtrics survey being sent to institutional research. Also talked about the housing issue and discussed working on that list of off campus housing. Try to have a survey for housing, but we need to figure this out to then share it with the Graduate Resource Center. Nord will be working on the transportation side of things. We have talked about increasing grants, but we will see how that goes moving forward. We have not decided on the next meeting during the summer.
- Student Affairs: We are taking volunteers for Frother's Daughter for setup and take down. Bowling Event on Friday went well.

Funding Requests:

Bill #32: 2024-25 Annual Budget

Burns: I will do a quick introduction to the budget. We had 32 hearings during a one week period and then a session where we put the budget together. Had an allocation of \$1,247,767. We currently have \$51,942 for unallocated. We also have some additions to the provisos section that will need to be made tonight.

Questions:

Rogowski - First, there is not the usual proviso language splitting them into the funding periods. Will that be done? Burns - yes, we will be adding in proviso language tonight as an amendment.

Hussain - Under the grant program, there is something on dissertation research grant, what is that? How do you apply? Burns - these grants are through the graduate school that we fund. Eligibility is for those actively working on their dissertation and you can google them and how to apply. They do it in the fall and spring.

Rogowski - It's spring and fall and you apply for the grant based on what supplies you need for the research such as materials and awards for participants.

Alleyne - Extend time for 10 minutes; Wheeler - 2nd

Balak - I noticed that LSC and MSC have the funding under expenses, can this be moved around? Burns - The request can be allocated internally for them to make everything easier.

Rogowski - I noticed that the hours have increased for the officers. Will this be an issue? Rowan - this is a maximum hours that can be worked rather than a requirement.

Rogowski - As long as there can be some adjustment and the administration is okay with this, then that's fine.

Pros:

Bethke - a lot of work has gone into this and it was a long process. It has been well thought out and I appreciate the work with this process.

Vaughn - Thanks to the budget committee for putting this together and working hard on the budget.

Rowan - This budget is great and the grants increase is something we hope to be able to maintain. We have new organizations getting funding this year. Our graduate RSOs are doing great work and every single hearing showed the work this budget will do to help graduate students on campus.

Rogowski - I think it looks great and I'm excited about the hour increase. Thank you for all of your effort. I'm excited.

Cons:

Pros:

Motions to amend: Schumm: Amendment 1: In attachment 2, insert new Section 6:

“For the 2024-2025 FY, the grants shall be allocated over three periods in which the following amounts are set aside for each period:

Presentation Grants:

\$100,000 between July 1 and October 31

\$100,000 between November 1 and February 28

\$100,000 between March 1 and June 30

Attendance Grants:

\$24,000 between July 1 and October 31

\$24,000 between November 1 and February 28

\$24,000 between March 1 and June 30

At the end of each period within the 2024-2025 FY, the funds unencumbered after processing all applications shall immediately roll over into the following period.”

2nd - Rogowski

Rowan - This allows for the grants to automatically roll over. Any objections? None.

Motion to amend: Bethke: Amendment 2: In attachment 2, insert at the end of Section 3:

“COGS Code 201.9 is waived as it relates to the printing of bound copies of the Southeast Review.”

2nd - Schumm

Bethke: Allows for the organization to print copies of the Southeast Review.

Call to Question - Schumm; 2nd - Wheeler

Ending: Burns - Thank you to the committee for engaging with this process and working to fund our RSOs and parts of campus such as the Globe and Childcare Center. I'm appreciative of everyone in this assembly.

Vote: 20-0-0

Bill #35: Presentation Grants transfer

Burns - back with another request to move money to presentation grants. They have been very active this funding period and this funding period goes until June. We want to make sure that we have money moving forward. This also includes several international presentation grants.

Questions: none

Pros: none

Cons:

Motion to Call to Question - Pakdehi; 2nd - Rogowski

Vote: 20-0-0

Rowan - relinquishes the Speaker role

Bill #36: GWIS funds transfer

Rowan - request from GWIS to move their funding from food to merch and awards.

Internal transfer of funds that we have already funded.

Questions:

Bethke - This is non-disposable water bottles? Yes.

Pros: Rogowski - I think it's great that an organization is trying to prevent money from going to sweepings.

Pakdehi - Great to support women in STEM.

Cons:

Call to Question - Alleyne; 2nd- Bethke

Vote: 20-0-0

Unfinished Business:

New Business:

Resolution #3: Commemoration Resolution

We are losing many great representatives this spring and summer due to graduation. They deserve recognition on paper. Reading of the resolution.

Questions: None.

Pros: Pakdehi - Wishing you good luck in the future and sad that you are leaving.

Ebuara - When I joined COGS, everyone was amazing with their work in the congress and I wish we could do more than thank them. Thank you. I wish you all the best in the future and hope we can see you again.

Cons:

Rogowski - This resolution is missing Rep. Delva.

Delva - I will be pushing to finish this summer rather than waiting for the Fall.

Pros:

Rogowski - Amending the resolution to include Rep. Delva and add required language;

2nd - Rowan

Call to Question - Nord; 2nd - Hussain

Vote: 20-0-0

Resolution #4: Stronger Future Framework Resolution

Rowan - there have been questions about COGS and one of the worries was about double dipping of representation. This resolution will create changes into statutes that will make COGS constitutionally non-partizen. It would make us the sole representatives of graduate students at FSU. We can pull an emergency break on resolutions. We will possibly fund the Supreme Court. We will maintain control of our funds and governance rules. It will create a slightly more bicameral system, but while SGA does the bulk, we will act more as a check. I think this framework ensures that COGS will be safe moving into the future. If passed tonight, it will go to the SGA on Wednesday.

Questions: McCraney - with the double dipping, will this prevent use of Sweepings funds? Rowan - It is currently being changed through SGA to allow for carry over between years.

Rogowski - To clarify, if everything goes into place, there will be a constitutional role that says graduate students can't serve in SGA? Rowan - Yes, but that is also why we will take on a little more responsibility with SGA, but it will solves issues from critics.

Rogowski - What about students who finish undergrad during their term and moved to graduate school? Will they be kicked out of SGA? Rowan - Likely yes, but that is what I would like to consult with everyone on.

Ebuara - I'm not sure about SGA. Are there currently graduate students in SGA? How does this secure COGS?

Pakdehi - Motion to extend time. 2nd - Nord.

Rowan - There are only 3 graduate students in SGA right now out of 80 spots. How does this secure COGS? It ensures that graduate students have a voice within the A&S budget process where currently it is only the Speaker as a non-voting role.

Ebuara - how do we know this will pass the senate? Rowan - I have been working on this with SGA to help with the process and make sure the resolution gets passed.

Rogowski - motion to extend time; 2nd - Balak

Bethke - We need to consider carefully the students who graduate from UG while in SGA. Rowan - I agree. This is why the actual process requires input from everyone.

Bethke - It seems like we are at the mercy of the Senate here. How do we get them on board? Rowan - No concessions have been made yet, but I have offered the SGA Treasurer to sit on the budget committee as a non-voting member. Otherwise, there has been very little pushback so far. The University has pushed to improve graduate students and this shows it.

Hussain - You mentioned 3 graduate students on SGA are from the Law School and Medical School. Rowan - in the past, there were more, but the graduate seats were removed in 2020. Hussain - can we bring back these seats? Rowan - instead of doing that, this resolution allows COGS to be the sole representation of graduate students.

Pros:

McCraney - Thank you for putting this together.

Burns - Thank you Jack for working on this to help secure COGS and critically thinking how can structures benefit graduate and undergraduate students.

Balak - Quite a few events would grind to halt without COGS and students at the Med School don't always realize how COGS have worked to preserve representation.

Ebuara - Thank you Jack for this idea. I did not think this could be done in the past, but I feel more confident about it now.

Hussain - Thank you Jack. I think this will raise graduate student voices.

Balogun - Thank you Jack for this. I think that your work is good by building a closer relationship with SGA. We presented to SGA about COGS last week and this is a good move.

Cons:

Pakdehi - Call to Question; 2nd - Rogowski

Closing - Rowan - Thank you for your support. I will work to push it through the Senate for the next week and a half. This is just the start and I will be reaching out for your help and what your colleges need. If we can get this to pass, then we continue to bring in more representatives to make sure our voices are heard.

Vote: 20-0-0

Call for nominees for the Deputy Speaker of Finance

Rogowski - can you serve until Graduation?

Burns - I can serve until the week of Graduation.

Rowan - We will try to seek out interested parties for over the summer and they will be appointed by the Senate President on a temporary basis during the first meeting of the summer.

Round Table:

Adjournment: 8:10pm

Next Meeting: **May 20, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom**