



Graduate Student Senate
General Assembly Meeting
Minutes
November 7, 2017

The University of Iowa
Graduate College
205 Gilmore Hall
Iowa City, IA 52241
(319) 335-3260

- 1. Call to Order General Assembly Meeting—6:00pm** – Ian Faith
- 2. Introduction of Senators** (2 mins.)
- 3. Graduate College Report** (10 mins.) – Dean John Keller
 - a. The Graduate Student Employment Committee (GSEC) is preparing an email message to let faculty, students, and staff know about employment committee and its mission. The committee also plans to survey graduate students in the spring 2018 semester about their needs, concerns, and experiences with graduate student benefits on campus. What will benefits be like for incoming students? For FY 18-19, the committee has recommended to keep the benefits the same as they were FY 17-18.
 - b. The Lulu Merle Johnson fellowship for underrepresented doctoral students are open for nominations. Find more information here: <https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/lulu-merle-johnson-fellowship>.
 - c. The graduate commencement in May will be broken up into two ceremonies – one for doctoral students in Hancher and one for master students in Carver.
 - d. Dean Keller explains the current concern with the proposed House Republican tax code reform and its plan to tax student tuition remission/waivers. The Graduate College is working on it by advocating with legislatures in DC and staying in contact with the Council of Graduate Schools. Senators can find more information by visiting the council's website, Twitter feed, etc. (<http://cgsnet.org/>).
 - i. Question by Sarah Raine: Is there anything we can do to help?
 - ii. Responses: The National Graduate and Professional Student Association is working on the issue. Ian noted that the senate will be in discussion/voting on a statement from GSS during this general assembly meeting. Dean Keller asks that we also forward the statement to him. He can also help forward the statement.
- 4. Ombudsperson Presentation** – Cynthia Joyce (15 mins.)
 - a. Data reported:
 - i. Who does the ombudsperson see? 26% students, 50% women, 19% racial minority
 - ii. Most of the people they see are concerned with hierarchical relationship issues.
 - iii. Highest organizational risk identified is the loss of productivity (37% reporting).
 - iv. More people are approaching the ombuds office. They see about 92 graduate students a year out of 667 total visitors. The office wants to make sure that graduate students know that ombuds are a useful resource, especially for hierarchical relationship (e.g. problems with advisors).
 - v. Email cynthia-joyce@uiowa.edu for more information.
- 5. Old Business**
 - a. No old business
- 6. New Business**
 - a. **Statement on GOP Proposed Tax Reform: Reconceptualize tuition waivers as taxable income?**
 - i. Plan to send statement out to campus community, Daily Iowan, and Press Citizen



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- ii. Motion to make a statement (passed).
- iii. Discussion:
 - 1. Gurjap: Proposal for letter-writing party and/or legislator call session. Also suggests reaching out to other constituencies on campus to emphasize how the tax proposal affects them.
 - 2. Addison: Emphasizes the chilling effect the current GOP tax plan would have on graduate education. Suggests including this in language of the statement.
 - 3. Unidentified senator: Emphasizes the value on public universities/education and that issue of the reform was more than a partisan issue.
 - 4. Someone questioned how the proposed reform bill affects many areas that might indirectly affect University/students and whether that should be included too. The statement currently focuses on tuition remission and the tax proposal's effect on grad students exclusively.
 - a. A counterpoint is made to maybe write a less focused statement on the tax reform bill in hopes that it would encourage more people to read it. Senators suggests if we include more points of argument then perhaps people reading the statement would find more interest in things other than graduate student tuition and taxes leading to the statement getting more reading time.
 - 5. Others argue for the more focused statement on the specific issue of tuition and taxable income.
 - 6. A suggestion is made to talk to chamber of commerce and other city offices about the reform.
 - 7. A suggestion to make the statement a joint statement with COGS is made.
 - 8. Someone asks since graduate students are restricted from getting a second job, if something does happen, how do we supplement income?
 - 9. Senators suggest addressing Iowa senators and house representatives of US Congress in the letter, reaching out to faculty senate, and contacting departments and other stakeholders.
 - 10. A suggestion is made to revise the draft and send it out via email. In the email, the executive committee should specify the timeframe for voting on the draft and senators should propose any changes via email. The final draft will be sent out for a vote to approve or not via a Qualtrics survey.
- iv. Motion to have a statement out for a vote by Sunday and close discussion (passed).

7. Reports

a. **President Report** – Ian Faith (5 mins)

i. Graduate Student Employment Committee (GSEC) Update:

- 1. The committee recommends no changes to graduate benefits at this time. This way departments may send out letters to prospective graduate students in good time.

b. **Treasurer Report** – James Mrkvicka (5 mins)



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- i. James walked through the proposed committee budgets and the templates for chairs to use.
- c. **Graduate Council Report** (2 mins)
 - i. The previous meeting, the committee added certificate program in the College of Public Health; Cellular and Molecular Biology Program name change to Molecular Medicine to better reflect its mission; Language changes to Graduate College guidelines to better explain what happens when PhD students don't defend dissertation on time
- d. **GPSG Delegates Report** (2 mins)
- e. **Committee Reports** (8 mins)
 - i. Graduate Student Success Committee – Nana Owusu
 - 1. The committee is working on notifying graduate students about wellness services and resources (e.g. ombudsperson), providing incentives for graduate students to fill out surveys to help us learn more about attrition rates, the various difficulties people have with advisors, and graduating on time.
 - ii. Graduate Student Teaching Committee – Caroline Cheung
 - 1. The committee's long term goal is to establish a series of teaching workshops every fall. The short term goal for this year is to research spring trainings currently being planned for spring, to develop spring programming and to potentially host a panel/Q&A of experienced TAs. Erico and KaLeigh met with the Center for Teaching about collaborating. The committee also needs to confirm how endorsement that is awarded/named (can't be called a certificate as it conflicts with language formally used on transcripts).
 - iii. Jakobsen Committee – Maria Morabe
 - 1. Call for artwork sent out. Preparing to send call for proposals.
 - iv. International Student Committee –
 - 1. The committee is working on building committee. The committee may work with Landon.
 - v. Service and Social Committee – Krista Grutz and Addison Woll
 - 1. The committee is working on scheduling its first social of the year. It will be November 30th 5-8 at Joe's (tentatively). FREE FOOD will be provided. Food could include Molly's Cupcakes, Zmarik's or Pizza.
 - vi. Travel Funds Committee – Victoria Parker and Lyndsey DuBose
 - 1. Award amounts were increased for domestic travel. Domestic travel outside of 300-mile range is eligible for \$750 and international for \$1000. In cycle 2, 67% of the applications were eligible (some of them were submitted outside of conference time range). The next scoring session is November 30.

~~8. Hawkeye Caucus Presentation – Casey Westlake (5 mins)~~
a. Presentation Cancelled

9. Adjournment – 7:01 pm



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Announcements

a. Next Travel Funds Application Deadline – November 17th

- i. The next GSS Travel Fund application deadline is Nov. 17, 2017 by 11:59 PM. This round of applications is for conferences occurring between July 1, 2017 and Dec. 31, 2017.
- ii. The following GSS Travel Fund application deadline is Jan. 19, 2017 by 11:59 PM. This round of applications is for conferences occurring between Sept. 1, 2017 and Feb. 28, 2017.

iii.

b. Jakobsen Memorial Conference Call for Artwork

- i. The 20th Annual Jakobsen Memorial Conference is seeking a work of art to be featured on our conference program and promotional materials! The theme for this year's conference is Mosaics: Inspiring Interdisciplinarity. There is a \$50 prize for the winning submission. Please send submissions and questions to marialiana-morabe@uiowa.edu.

2017-2018 Graduate Student Senate
Roster of Elected Positions

Executive Officers:

President	Ian Faith	ian-faith@uiowa.edu
Vice President	Maria Morabe	marialiana-morabe@uiowa.edu
Treasurer	James Mrkvicka	james-mrkvicka@uiowa.edu
Executive Associate	KaLeigh White	kaleigh-white@uiowa.edu
Membership/PR Officer	Landon Elkind	landon-elkind@uiowa.edu
Parliamentarian	Shane Solst	shane-solst@uiowa.edu

GPSG Delegates:

Landon Elkind	landon-elkind@uiowa.edu
Ian Faith	ian-faith@uiowa.edu
Maria Morabe	marialiana-morabe@uiowa.edu
Jenny Verniero	jennifer-verniero@uiowa.edu
KaLeigh White	kaleigh-white@uiowa.edu

Graduate Council:

Ian Faith	ian-faith@uiowa.edu
Jenny Verniero	jennifer-verniero@uiowa.edu
KaLeigh White	kaleigh-white@uiowa.edu
Addison Woll	addison-woll@uiowa.edu

Webmaster:

Claire Muerdter	claire-muerdter@uiowa.edu
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Roster of Appointed Positions

Committee Chairs:

Graduate Success Committee	Nana Owusu	nana-owusu@uiowa.edu
Graduate Teaching Committee	Caroline Cheung	caroline-cheung@uiowa.edu
International Students Committee	OPEN	
Jakobsen Conference Committee	Maria Morabe	marialiana-morabe@uiowa.edu
Service and Social Committee	Krista Grutz	krista-grutz@uiowa.edu
	Addison Woll (Fall)	addison-woll@uiowa.edu
	Jenny Verniero (Spring)	jennifer-verniero@uiowa.edu
Travel Funds Committee	Victoria Parker	victoria-parker@uiowa.edu
	Lyndsey DuBose	lyndsey-dubose@uiowa.edu