

University of California, Los Angeles
Graduate Student Association Forum #2, Fall Quarter
Wednesday, November 28, 2018, 5:30pm

Forum minutes taken by Jackie D’Almeida, Director of Communications

CALL TO ORDER – 5:40pm

Approval of minutes, appointments and agenda – Approved.

GSA Budget for the 2018-2019 Academic Year

Michael Skiles, GSA President

- Surplus budget allocation:
 - We keep a finite percentage of each year’s budget in the reserve, and inevitably have rollover from the previous years.
- Your councils are given 75% of what your councils were given for the previous year. We do this because it is very unlikely that any department will lose more than 25% of their students.
 - Now that we know actual enrollment, we are mostly adding the remaining 25% back in – although this amount may vary slightly.

ASUCLA Representative

- The data is for this fall, last winter and last spring quarters. There may be some discrepancies if enrollment has changed.
- These aren’t necessarily departments, but degrees.
- Engineering department – some departments seem incorrect.
- Social Sciences – the department recently added a Master of Social Sciences, which is interdisciplinary.
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Michael Skiles

- We want to make sure all of those are listed correctly and we’re not missing any students. We can approve of this and then revisit it later.
- Motion to approve this (seconded)
 - **Vote: APPROVED**
- Amendment discussion:
 - It came to my attention that four councils were not using their money. Each council gets the rollover from the previous year, and funds are spent first-in, first-out.
 - Council money comes from student dues for that year, and the student should get some events or programming from their dues.
 - The leadership for council is not the same every year, and GSA has not always done our best at reaching out to each council to ensure they could navigate bureaucracy of student accounting.

- Nursing, humanities, arts & architecture have all made progress in catching up on their backlogged money.
- Dentistry has not made a plan to spend their money, and now they have both their current years' funds, but also the full three years previous. I spoke with all their forum representatives and encouraged them to spend their money.
- Eric invited Derek from the dental council to give a presentation on how the dental program plans to spend their surplus carryover.
- I move that we shift the money that would go to the general reserve back to the dental council (seconded)

Dental Council Representative

- The previous leadership wasn't really sure how to spend the money.
- For the future we have a lot of events planned for our students, including a formal in the spring that comes out to \$12,000, and a talent show that comes out to \$18,000.
- We think these will encourage camaraderie and networking.
- We have assurances from our council that the money will get spent. Our previous leadership didn't have very clear communication with GSA.
- Question – I heard you would spend \$18,000, but you only have \$16,000 in surplus
 - Answer – we have other budgetary funds from other departments.
 - ASUCLA – there is also money from even further back.

Michael Skiles

- If any of your councils also has surplus, I encourage you to spend it.
- Motion – (seconded)
 - **Vote: APPROVED.**
- Line item 63 and 64
 - Our discretionary programs fund, and also our publications fund. Those are funded by SFAC, and because of that the carryover each year can only go into those programs.
 - For eight years Stacy Meeker was a very fierce proponent of publications, and ensured that no GSA President ever touch it, and as a result there is a lot of surplus carryover. I would like to gradually move some of this surplus to our discretionary turnover.
 - Last year I worked to expand other graduate student associations, including the International Graduate Student Association, the Latinx Graduate Student Association, and others.
 - We were able to increase their funding dramatically.
 - Question – what does publications do?
 - Answer – they are a very good program, and fund things like Queer Cats, the Indigenous People's Law Journal, and many others. Many of these represent minority communities, some of them are the only journals that represent that specific topic. It's a program I'm eager to see funded as well.

- Our Constant Contact price have gone up as well, unfortunately UCLA doesn't give us the emails of students, so we have to get them in other ways. Our email list has quadrupled in the last three years, and now our subscription costs have gone up.
- Please also spread the news to your constituents to have them sign up for the newsletter – or send a message to doc@gsa.asucla.ucla.edu.

Michelle Viorato, GSA Vice President of External Affairs

- \$3,000 is not enough, but I would urge you to approve this.
- I'm excited that we were able to hire people to do important work connecting with the local neighborhood council. The remaining amount of money is to take graduate students to several conferences.
- Other campuses are able to offer \$20,000 or more to offices like mine, and are able to send 8 students. I'm hoping to take just 2- 4 students.

Michael Skiles

- Graduate Student Events – we have really only been funding the fall events with our preliminary budget, so the remaining allocations are for the end of this quarter, and the winter/spring events.
- Next Thursday we're co-hosting an event with the Anderson school. If any of your councils are interested in co-hosting an event, we are eager to expand.
- The only stipulation is that the event has to be open to all graduate students.
- We are going to be repeating the wine tasting event in February.
- **Motion for a vote: no opposition (APPROVED)**

Officer Reports

Michael Skiles, GSA President

- Great successes on the local front.
- Last year I worked with the Westwood local business district to increase more local casual fast food and coffee/dessert restaurants. There has been an effective ban on new fast casual food, because historical stakeholders have fought to preserve more fine dining establishments.
- Last year we passed a resolution in favor of an amendment to make this change. Paul Koretz has approved that change, but there will still have to be a public hearing and will likely be opposition.
- Also last year we supported the Westwood Forward movement, and the North Westwood Neighborhood Council held its first meeting after our last forum meeting.
- On the agenda for the next council meeting, we are addressing housing. Previous housing development has been very incremental, but next meeting we are going to be listening to a proposal for a project that would fund 500 students below market rate, that would be right next to the W hotel. This would also alleviate parking problems.
- We're hoping to see more private housing solutions below market rate, like this one.

- We're also going to hear from Rocco's, they are seeking to repeal many of the restrictions that have been placed on them. What was forced to be a restaurant under the previous regime will hopefully become more college-centered establishment.
- We are also going to be discussion bridge housing. This is a very dignified housing solution, and most neighborhood council areas have a phobia of the homeless, but Koretz has proposed that we put bridge housing in our community and we will be considering that as well.
- There are a lot of committees for varied interests, if you're interested in any of these please email northwestwoodcouncil@gmail.com.
- The North Westwood Neighborhood Council is now separate from Westwood Forward, but Westwood Forward is still a political entity and is still seeking membership. If you're interested in that, please email me at pres@gsa.asucla.ucla.edu.
- I heard today that the University Apartment South apartments are considering turning their study spaces into apartments, and that is something we will fight.

Eric Hu, GSA Vice President of Internal Affairs

- Our new administrative affairs director is here, feel free to email her at administrativeaffairs@gsa.asucla.ucla.edu

Michelle Viorato

- A representative from UAW will be here later to discuss some of the UC Path problems.
- We created a list of demands for the UC Regents, and we got over a thousand students to sign on. It was enough to get the UC Regents and UCOP interested, 61.7% were from UCLA alone. We were able to get a meeting with the executive director of the UC Path system last Monday, and we just got a meeting with the person in charge of UCLA rollout. They emailed us saying they would hold a townhall on December 6th. We will create a Facebook event and share that with you.
- Additionally, we met with graduate division and had some conversations about UC Path with them as well. We also learned that 45% of parenting students are food insecure.

Ashley Wright, Vice President of Academic Affairs

- All the academic senate committees continue to meet, I handle the meetings as needed.

UCGPS Charter Presentation

Michelle Viorato

- UCLA and UC Santa Cruz were the only UC's who haven't approved the charter yet. Mostly this was because we didn't have the capacity to be involved last year.
- I have been spending every month at meetings with UCGPC, and if anyone has any questions please let me know.
- We are not currently members, I have conditional membership for this year.
- I will be applying for a fee waiver to become members if this is approved.
- Michael will speak about what it means to be a member of UCGPC.

Michael Skiles

- Two years ago several GSA leadership members came together to try and figure out how the needs of our community could be better addressed. By having an organization that spans UC institutions we can assure that we always have a seat at the table.
- UCGPC has become as important as UCSA.
- It's very important to work together with UCSA. I do think that creating a UCGPC is very important for advocacy measures.
- Motion to approve the UCGPC Charter (seconded)
 - **Vote: APPROVED**
- Michelle Viorato: we need to do a roll call count to get the exact number who abstain.
 - Final count: 20 approve, 0 oppose, 0 abstain.

CAM Presentation

Sabrina Miller

- We are graduate students who do advising work for first and second year students, which is about 17,000 students.
- We go through three weeks of training and are under the tutor category.
- Many of us are the first point of contact for many students in the College of Letters and Science.
- We are only 25 graduate students, and this position has been here for 10 years.
- We have a one-stop-shop window where students can come in and ask questions. We also have advising on the Hill, so students can come talk to us there as well.
- I work in the Peers department to keep underrepresented students in STEM fields and have had to cut back on the amount of students I can see.
- Last year when UCOP decided to raise tuition, they also decided to cut our benefits and fee remission. This came after many other deadlines for other positions had passed.
- We have done some protesting and fighting to ensure our positions remain. We had our funding reinstated for one year only.
- A lot of other positions are being moved out of the tutor category, partially for budget issues.

Resolution to Cap Administrative Pay at the Governor's Salary

Zackery Fisher

- Some questions regarded that this was purely symbolic, but I promise that if we approve this, I will take a lot of action right away. I will go to the press. This will be invaluable.
- It's very important that we take a strong stance on this now. The competitiveness argument is strong, but we're so far away from the point where we're hiring people.
- We have to decide if we're okay with an oligarchy situation, or if we want to support students who are going through a lot of pain.
- Twenty years ago the administrators salary has skyrocketed. This isn't radical from a historical perspective.
- Question – how many administrators are above the governor's pay?
 - Answer – not exactly sure, but at the very least there are dozens and dozens.

- Ashley Wright - Have you looked at other competitive benchmarks that might be more effective – others have mentioned that the governor’s salary is lower because they have been able to enrich themselves privately before running.
 - Answer: I don’t think that is true. We are in oligarchic times where 97% of people don’t make this much.
- Question – in the Social Sciences we didn’t want this to be UCLA specific. Michelle, would UCGPC be interested in supporting something like this?
 - Michelle: Many undergraduates might not support this, but if we were to approve this I could take it before UCSA and UCGPC. They might not necessarily support it. I feel that this would be more powerful if we did more research into the salary number to agree on what is an appropriate salary.
 - Zackary: I think this is a just number, and a morally fair number. You shouldn’t be working at this school because you want to get rich. You should be here because you want to expand knowledge. I will go out to every other analogous organization to ours and discuss this.
- Michael Skiles – I don’t buy this argument that you have to be independently wealthy in order to survive on \$202,000 a year in Sacramento. I don’t think anyone could make the argument that anyone needs that much to maintain their own wellbeing. The competitiveness argument goes both ways. Any of us could make more elsewhere.
- Question – does this include the deans of the departments?
 - Answer – that has been left ambiguous in this, but no it does not include those folks.
- Question – how would the surplus money be allocated, and how do we ensure that it would be beneficial to graduate students?
 - Answer – that is outside the scope of this, but this would help for negotiating purposes.
- Question – there’s not a clear correlation between the administrators and the governor. A lot of administrators would not want to do the work they do for this pay grade.
 - Answer – I think it’s fair to say that they are hoarding resources.
- Motion to approve (seconded)
 - **Vote: APPROVED.**

UCPATH Discussion

Michelle Viorato

- UAW was able to expand their survey to include undergraduates as well.
- We had a meeting with the UC Path Executive Director. We asked them to reword the reporting system, because students haven’t been able to get confirmation that their issues were resolved.
- We are encouraging more training for departments, we learned that departments were retaining information differently.
- He confirmed that he would follow up on these issues.
- Tentatively we will hold a town hall with these representatives next week.

Allie Carlyle, Recording Secretary of UAW 2865.

- I represent all the TA's and tutors across campus.
- We heard a range of complaints from a lot of students.
- There were a lot of issues with rollout.
- Question – one thing to consider is expanding the emergency loans – but the amounts are insulting, I've had to pay bills late but the loan amounts were \$300
 - Answer – I believe they've just extended those loans to the amount of one paycheck.
- Another problem with UC Path is that they have neglected to subtract union dues, which many of us have elected to be a part of, and that's illegal.

ADJOURNED – 7:41pm