

University of California, Los Angeles
Graduate Student Association Forum #2, Spring Quarter
Wednesday, May 8, 2019, 5:30pm

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

CALL TO ORDER – 5:35 pm

Consent Calendar:

1. Approval of Minutes - No Objections
2. Approval of Agenda – No Objections

Executive Officer Reports

Michael Skiles GSA President

- Joshua Meyer accepted a position overseas, so we are looking to fill his position.
- The phone call about providing benefits to students working in labs was postponed, I’m hoping others will join me on the call.
- Last year I asked members of the board to join me in supporting the position of Director of Diversity and Inclusion. The appointment was for one year. I believe the new officers are inclined to keep this position, but since we will need to hire for this position soon I am hoping we can hear from Ernesto about what this position entails.
- ASUCLA is the entity that we’re all a part of, it’s a great organization that significantly supports the work that GSA does and allows us independence and autonomy.
 - The appointment to fill the ASUCLA Board of Directors Representative is open.
 - We’ve received three applications, and we think Ernesto Arciniega is best fit for the position.
 - Motion to approve Ernesto Arciniega’s nomination to the ASUCLA Board of Directors Representative (seconded)
 - **Vote: APPROVED**

Presentation and Possible Resolution of Support for Senate Bill 50 (Which Encourages the Development of Affordable Housing Within ½ Mile of Transit Stops)

Michael Skiles GSA President

- There is a broad coalition of support for this bill
- One of the reasons this bill is important is because there is broad consensus that the high cost of housing is partially due to the limited supply of housing.
- Westwood has the highest rent costs in the country except for two zip codes in Manhattan.
- One of the things that has stopped housing from getting built is the fact that single family home areas take up a significant amount of space in Westwood.
- Decades ago single-family zones had very strict zoning laws. Many of these laws were racial.
- This bill recognizes that more housing needs to be built around areas like Universities that are job rich and near transit stops.

- Flow chart (handout) does a good job explaining the main ideas of this bill.
- The bill has protections against evicting residents from their apartments in order to build bigger apartments.
- Some sites are considered low-income and the gentrification risk is the highest, the bill allows them to self-determine what will happen.
- It carves out areas that are coastal or close to potential fires.
- Motion to endorse SB 50 (seconded)
 - Comment: I'm worried that this bill provides a perverse incentive for communities to oppose transit construction.
 - Michael Skiles: I agree that this might be a concern, but most of these areas have already said yes to transit.
 - Comment: Can you give us an idea which student groups have supported this bill?
 - Answer: As I mentioned, UC Students Association has voiced support, there is a broad coalition.
 - **Vote: APPROVED** (12 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstain)

Ernesto Arciniega

- I'm the current Director of GSA of Diversity and Inclusion.
- As you know this was a pilot program, and works towards diversity and inclusion, and makes sure that we are connected with various groups across campus.
- We've tried to reach out to different groups such as the LGBT center.
- I would like to ask you to consider extending this position to next year.

Consideration of Election Reforms (Including Possible Changes Recommended By Ad Hoc Election Committee)

Steven Moran, EGSA

- We are hoping to change several of the codes. Motion to vacate approval of the election results and then reaffirm (seconded)
 - **Vote: APPROVED**
- Progress of the ad hoc committee:
 - General sentiments that we have is that we want to simplify the process to encourage more people to participate in the process. We want to encourage more participation by making the process more fair and equitable.
 - We want to move the process for election complaints to during the election.
 - We want to offer a stipend to people who can be on call for one hour seven days a week.
 - We would like to remove email restrictions because we realize that there are still associations and groups that can send out emails to thousands of students.
 - We don't think there should be departmental endorsements.
 - We want to allow councils to endorse candidates, but we would encourage them to interview all candidates before issuing an endorsement.

- We want to make the process a lot simpler, and more equitable by allowing people to be more involved.
- We would like to recruit more candidates and extend the application deadline. We should be able to get more applicants. We are thinking to change the application process to make it easier to apply.
- Before we draft language, I was wondering if there are any issues with the items I just discussed.
- Comment: How could departmental non-endorsement be enforced?
 - Answer: We could communicate to all candidates that when they contact departments, they have to make it clear that they are not asking for an endorsement.
- Comment: I was on the elections board, and it really was a lot of work
 - Response: Yes, that's why we're thinking a \$100 stipend or gift card would be good.
- Comment: Have you looked at what other graduate councils are doing to raise participation rates?
- Comment: Berkeley has higher participation, but they also have higher stipends. People don't apply because they know it's a lot of work.
- Comment: There might not be money in the budget for increased stipends.
- Comment: There's a lot of language in the codes that is not very clear, for example endorsements are not always clear.
- Are there any objections to allowing candidates to email with some rules behind that?
 - Comment: does it contribute to inequalities if candidates are in smaller departments?
 - Answer: I was originally in favor of not allowing emails, but we ultimately decided it might be a better idea for departments to make available upcoming events so that a student from a smaller department could attend to get their name out.
- Comment: I came out against slates because I think it allows for multiple people to run against one.
- Do people in general agree with allowing slates?
- Comment: In the history of GSA there are extremely few cases when a person from a huge department ran against a person from a small department, and the person from the small department wins. The system shouldn't always make it so that the person from the small department is set up to fail. The only way we can make it possible for people from small departments to win is if they can work with people from other schools by forming a slate. If we ban slates it will be a de facto ban on people from small departments winning.
- Comment: Can we send more emails?
 - Answer: We can look at having BruinPost send another email.
- Comment: Is it reasonable to ban emails?

- Answer: If emails were not allowed, it would be very hard to enforce. The departments, with notification, it's perfectly reasonable to ask them to stay out of this.

ADJOURNMENT 6:39 pm