

Graduate Student Organization (GSO)
Spring 2024 General Meeting 1
Friday, February 09, 2024, at 12:30 p.m.
Location: Student Union, Magnolia Room AB (210)

1. **Call Meeting to Order [12:34 PM]**
2. **Attendance** [establish quorum: 50% +1 of current membership]
3. **President's Welcome:** Clement Tochukwu Okolo
 - a. Thanked everyone for attending, including Dean Mary Farmer-Kaiser.
4. **President's Report:** Clement Tochukwu Okolo
 - a. Advocacy Report for 2022/23 Academic Year
 - i. Brief discussion of the tables in the Report, with a focus on the growing participation as more representatives join the GSO alongside the growing funding needs of Graduate Students. Another aspect of the report includes a record of GSO Legislation. A link to each semester's report can be found [here](#).
 - b. 2024 Krewe of Roux Royal Court – Benjamin and Tessa represented GSO
 - i. President Okolo gave thanks to the GSO Representatives for their nominations. Both Public Relations Officer Rock and Secretary Vidrine showed clear support for the continuation of such an event.
 - c. Doctoral Research and Travel Grant
 - i. GSO President Okolo and Dean Farmer-Kaiser shared with the General Committee the immense opportunity such a grant gives to UL Lafayette's Graduate Students. Dean Farmer-Kaiser reaffirmed that this program is just getting started, as her office hopes to see \$50,000.00 funded by this program by June 15th. She also confirmed the potential for a Masters Student version. Further details on the program can be found [Here](#).
 - In the interim of any developments on a Masters R&T Grant, the GSO will move forward with optimizing its funding structure to serve Masters Students while redirecting PhD requests, whenever applicable, to the new Doctoral R&T Grant.
 - ii. The floor was then open for questions.
 - Is there a maximum dollar amount?
 - The max amount on each grant for pre and post-candidacy students is \$1500.00 and \$2500.00, respectively.
 - What is the turnaround for funds to be requested and then given?
 - The goal is to be as quick as possible about funding turnaround with a week between requests and approval, but applicants should plan for a month-long wait to receive approved funds based on the number of requests.
 - "Your paychecks matter. These [Funds] matter." -Dean MFK
 - As an aside, Dean Farmer-Kaiser is also working to see the total funds be used per semester rather than per year.
 - Doubling our funding opportunities per year.
 - If a student requested three times but did not empty their max amount, can they continue to request?

- While there is no maximum amount, a model has been used following Virginia Tech, Clemson, and other universities' guidelines for limiting funds. This follows the idea of three funding awards with one award per academic year to support as many students as possible.
- And if departments have personal funding programs for PhD students, the GSO and Dean's office can coordinate on who has received funding through their department's program.

5. Vice President's Report: Abdel Garbie

- Shopper Shuttle Project Seeks Official GSO Support
 - Project Representatives Katarina Brankovic and Andrew Buderer shared the program's core ideas with the Advocacy Committee. They highlighted their goal of improving shuttle services to support students, especially international, who do not have cars so that they can travel the city of Lafayette safely.
 - A full report on this Advocacy Committee discussion can be found [here](#).
- SGA Survey – Greyson Stepanek [MBA]
 - Representative Stepanek, in service to the SGA as its President, shared the Association's development of park accessibility surveys, seeking answers to what type of parking Graduate Assistants wanted. This survey also includes discussions on what graduate students would want from a Student Life Center [[Survey Here](#)]
- Geoscience Department concern
 - A professor is leaving by the end of the semester, leaving three students whom she did not let know of this in time for them to reorganize their research projects. This situation is still developing. Dean Mary Farmer-Kaiser expressed her office's commitment to assisting students in these situations and recommended the students get in touch with their department's graduate coordinator and the Graduate School itself to help solve this issue.

6. Communications Report: Tessa Rock

- Officer Rock continued requests for information from GSO Representatives to fulfill the new "Meet A Rep" Instagram Project.
- Communication survey has been launched via various platforms [[Survey Here](#)]
 - Officer Rock seeks the input of all Graduate Students on exciting programs that will make the most of their time at UL Lafayette.
- The Communication Committee looks to various program ideas to get relations between the GSO and Graduate Student Body developed. Including:
 - An official flock for The Big Event [March 16th], a day of community service that kicks off Graduate Student Appreciation Week.
 - Grad Appreciation Week itself, working with the Dean's office to figure out events to avoid overlap of events.
 - And a Stress Toy Day for all your Stressed Out Needs.
- But for now, Rock is seeking a test run program to see what Graduates want out of their UL Lafayette experience.
 - A Messages of Kindness program or Message Rocks days.

7. **Treasurer's Report:** Precious Batubo

- a. Status of current applications.
 - i. Forty applications in total, mainly for Travel, Research & Supplies, and one Professional Development request.
- b. Alternative funding opportunities
 - i. Looking into various programs to develop funds for students to use available on the GSO Website.
- c. Methods of Further GSO Funding
 - i. Researching if Online Graduate Students should be included in the Fifteen fee requirement to access GSO funds as on-campus students.
 - Dean Farmer-Kaiser sees an opportunity to have those fees paid for in the same way general fees for Graduate Assistants were paid by the University in Fall 2023.
 - ii. Looking into fundraising ideals from GSO Representatives to share in the near future.

8. **Old Business**

- a. Special Education Department Concern - **Jennah Detraz**
 - i. Forced to leave the university in Fall 2024, since then the GSO has attempted to get in touch with other students affected by these issues with no results so far.
- b. Software Funding Requests Update
 - i. Following up on the Fall 2023 program to receive a list of requested programs to the graduate school, there have yet to be any updates on an official list of already subscribed software programs in use at various University Departments.

9. **New Business**

- a. Vote—Funding Applications for General Meeting 1 [Spreadsheet Below]
 - i. Motion to provisionally approve all applications that are in good standing and can be funded with the soon-to-be-encumbered budget
 - Moved, Seconded, & Approved
 - ii. Motion on allowing the GSO to use its portion of the encumbrance budget for programs this semester [Either 5% of current encumbrance or 500 dollars]
 - Moved, Seconded & Approved

10. **Other Advocacy/Concerns/Questions**

- a. Floor opened to representatives' concerns
 - i. GSO Rep John Miller
 - Shared concerns with Dean Mary Farmer-Kaiser on issues regarding potential stipend pay increases for UL Lafayette GAs built from the Oklahoma State University's Annual Stipend Survey, the development of Health Insurance programs for non-international students, and the idea of an Outstanding PhD Student Award much like the current Outstanding Masters Student version.

- Dean Farmer-Kaiser confirmed the Graduate School's work with the wider UL Lafayette system for a stipend increase for Fall 2024 and the development of a Health Insurance Program for non-international students. Both of these are still in the earliest stages of discussion but Dean Farmer-Kaiser confirmed that the Graduate School is committed to their approval.
- Dean Farmer-Kaiser also confirmed that a new Outstanding Graduate Student program would fall under GSO concern as it uses GSO Funds.

11. Announcements

- a. After this meeting, the GSO President will follow up via email to Reps with notes you can relay to your departments' students
- b. Representatives are responsible for finding a successor and ensuring that they understand their responsibilities [see [By-law](#)]
- c. Get a GSO Stoll!

12. Adjournment [1:47 PM]

13. Chart of Approved Funding Requests Can Be Found Here

Approved Funding Requests			
Name	Department	Request Type	Amount Approved
Kevin Torgersen	BIO	Travel – With Academic Duties	\$300.00
Bilal Khan	ENGL	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Bella Patterson	PSYCH	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Eric Haddad	BIO	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Nicole Stockburger	ENGL	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Jacob Norris	PSYCH	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Rebecca Holcomb	ENGL	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Jon-Patric Veal	PSYCH	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Maxwell Gontarek	ENGL	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Farooq Azam Khanzada	CIV ENG	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$500.00
Ahmed Hossain	CIV ENG	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$500.00
Kimberly Povloski	ENGL	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Sherbaz Khan	CIV ENG	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$500.00
Katherine Chung	EDFL	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Wesley Maxwell-Malvini	PSYCH	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Noelle Rudolf	ENGL	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$300.00
Taylor Roussel	PSYCH	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Matthew Arcona	PSYCH	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Brandi Hanna	ENGL	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Warisara Sawin	MOD LANG	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Lea Fougerolle	MOD LANG	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$ 37.47
Upasana Ganguly	BIO	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$300.00
Lea Fougerolle	MOD LANG	Travel - Without Academic Duties	\$ 75.00
Sarah Djos-Raph	MOD LANG	Travel - With Academic Duties	\$400.00
Anhar Bekhet	EDFL	Research & Supplies	\$100.00
Kevin Torgersen	BIO	Research & Supplies	\$100.00
Md Ariful Islam	BIO	Research & Supplies	\$160.00
Lea Fougerolle	MOD LANG	Research & Supplies	\$160.00