

Spring 2026 Advocacy Meeting Minutes

GSO Advocacy Committee Meeting

In Person: Teche Room (116)

Feb 5, 2026 10:00 AM

Attendance:

- **Reem Ahmed:** GSO vice President, Advocacy committee chair, COUN ED representative
- **Clement Okolo:** GSO President
- **Michael Pellerin:** GSO Secretary, Criminal Justice representative
- **Leah Pontiff:** MBA representative

The meeting started at **10:10**

• **Old Business**

- Students, especially international students, are anxious about current stipend rates and find them unfitting for the rising cost of living.
 - Biweekly payments might help with budgeting
 - Students are having to work while being in school to fund themselves, which is increasing the difficulties of successfully completing their academic and assistantship duties – International students are unable to work outside of their GA hours to secure more funding
 - Professors/ GAs need better support in finding grants to better fund research/ teaching assistants

• **New Business**

- Initiatives for Spring 2026
 - Grant Writing Workshop
 - Invite professors with successful grant experience to lead the workshop

- Representatives are welcome to suggest professors they believe would be a good addition to the list below
- Suggested Professors: [HERE](#) (Add Dr. Sharon's contact information)
 - We are going to have a diverse roster of professors: 1 from Counseling dept. – 1 from English dept. – 1 from Engineering dept. – 1 from CMIX dept.
 - Few additional professors will be suggested in case a professor is unable to make it to the panel
 - Fundraiser can be in February (around valentines day) since there is less preparation necessary – Grant writing Panel can be in March so that events are spread out and the professors have enough time to pick a date and prep for the panel
- Suggestions for other initiatives
 - Resume workshop in April
 - Possibly in Moody Hall or Library or student union
 - Students can go into one of the computer labs and work on their resumes during the workshop
 - Possibly ask recruiters from the career fair to join the workshop
 - “Speed hiring” : 5-10 minutes of resume review
 - Send survey asking students which industries they're looking to get into
- **Floor Open for Any Other Concerns**
 - Send a general survey to graduate students to hear their concerns
 - Short survey
 - Some questions regarding the hooding ceremony
 - A few other questions regarding general concerns

The meeting ended at 11:00