

Graduate Student Organization
Summer 2020 Meeting
Date: Wednesday July 8, 2020 | Time: 4:00 pm | Location: Zoom

Meeting Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Vice President Tolu Olukoga, serving as Interim President, calls the meeting to order at 4:09 pm.

2. Attendance

Present:

GSO Advisor:

Dr. Khey

Executives:

1. Tolu Olukoga (Vice President, serving as Interim President – Rep for Petroleum Engineering)
2. Jourdan Hilliard (Public Relations – Rep for Criminal Justice)
3. Jung Tae (JT) Hwang (Treasurer – Rep for English)
4. Christine Savoie (Secretary – History) – absent, Sarah Smith is serving as proxy

Members:

5. Remil Aguda (Rep for Chemical Engineering)
6. Maggi Bienvenu (Rep for Education)
7. Srijana Ghimire (Rep for Mathematics)
8. Kasem Khalil (Rep for Computer Science & Engineering)
9. Angelina Huynh (as proxy Rep for Kinesiology)
10. Juita Martinez (Rep for Biology)
11. Prudence Mbah (Communication)
12. Nancy Nguyen (Rep for Psychology)
13. Hilda Oforio-Addo (Rep for Civil Engineering)
14. Sarah Smith (proxy for Secretary/History – Rep for Modern Languages)
15. Patrick Taylor (Rep for Geology)

Absent (listed by program):

1. Accounting
2. Architecture
3. Business Administration
4. Communicative Disorders
5. Counselor Education
6. Electrical Engineering
7. Environmental Resource Science
8. Gifted Education
9. Informatics
10. MA in Teaching
11. Mechanical Engineering
12. Music
13. Nursing
14. Physics
15. Systems Technology

16. President's Welcome

Interim President Olukoga welcomes representatives. Main goal for today is to fill vacancies on Executive Board to move forward with funding for Spring 2020 applications and students who are eager to receive their funding.

17. President's Report

Nothing to report

18. VP's Report

Nothing to report

19. Treasurer/Secretary's Report

a. Current Budget

Treasurer Hwang previously sent the funding application spreadsheet in June, this included already approved applications from Spring and a handful of applications that have not yet been voted on (as there was only one spring meeting in 2020, in February).

Treasurer Hwang reports that we will have a lot of money left over but the budget is not exact because some funding approved was not spent (i.e. for canceled conferences because of the pandemic). Treasurer Hwang needs to talk with Tanya at Grad School office to compare numbers. If the budget excess carries over from spring, the summer and fall should be well-funded.

20. Report from Communication Committee

Nothing to report

21. Old Business

a. GSO – not listed on cashier's office explanation of fees

Interim President Olukoga explains that this issue has not yet been addressed and all presented before the pandemic. Move to new business.

b. Graduate Fee

c. Graduate Enhancement Fee

22. New Business

a. Elect new President and PRO

The last president graduated in spring, but we need a new president. Former president John can help with transition. Interim President Olukoga explains position duties. Interim President Olukoga will not run for President as she has too many time commitments.

Public Relations Officer (PRO) Hilliard is graduating and we need a new Public Relations chair. PRO Hilliard explains duties (Facebook group, training for website updating). PRO Hilliard would help with transition and access to internet accounts for news, application due dates, dates of meetings, Grad School events (reshare).

Interim President Olukoga welcomes Dr. Khey to meeting. Dr. Khey introduces himself.

Interim President Olukoga motion to election of PRO. Asks for nominees for PRO.

Juita from Biology asks about other representatives not in attendance could weigh in, since there was short notice on the meeting.

Angelina from Kinesiology has questions on meeting times and term durations, here for just one semester. PRO Hilliard explains PRO position and history of GSO meeting times, along with term information.

Treasurer Hwang asks about new PR person and training for website access. Dr. Khey explains that website access training might be made faster if you have previous experience with technology.

Maggi from Education says she can help for PRO because she has experience from her program, but cannot take on an official role.

Hilda from Civil Engineering has questions about training but willing to learn. Hilda self-nominates and is elected Public Relations Officer by unanimous vote.

Sarah Smith from Modern Languages nominates herself as President of GSO. With no other nominations, Interim President Olukoga calls for a vote. Sarah is elected to GSO President by unanimous vote.

Interim President Olukoga confirms that Dr. Khey will be in touch with official add to GSO email. Dr. Khey expresses his enthusiasm in working with the newly elected officers.

b. Remote Application Procedure for Summer 2020

Treasurer Hwang asks about application for departments with reps that are not in attendance. Interim President Olukoga brings up by-laws but also concerns about internet access for representatives. Maggi from Education suggests the applications be moved to the bottom of the pile to be considered in the fall. Summer applications: procedure will cover spring applications that were not turned in because of a lack of physical applications?

Interim President Olukoga shares document with answers to concerns about applications made in collaboration with the Graduate School. Process has been approved by Graduate School.

Maggi from Education brings up virtual conferences where students must pay still fees. Interim President Olukoga explains that although travel is not approved, other fees from virtual conference attendance can be. Maggi from Education expresses that this procedure would be good to continue in the future for online programs or programs where students do not meet regularly. Maggi points out that SGA has an online application. Interim President Olukoga suggests that we do look into digitizing. Maggi suggests that rep can do carbon copy and fund requester signs digital version. Maggi makes motion for spring and summer applications, with modifications for online conferences. Passes with unanimous vote.

c. Fate of Previously Received Application – approved and yet to be considered

Treasurer Hwang has collection of paper applications from spring, along with the ones without problems in the Excel file. Sarah from Modern Languages brings up that we do not know if the people actually traveled or used funding. Treasurer Hwang clarifies that it is not a question of available funds in budget and that he will cross-check numbers with Tanya. Treasurer Hwang will need to create a new budget, he emailed requestors. One student, for example, was approved but could not get the check reimbursement form. Treasurer Hwang asks if we make an exception for these? Treasurer Hwang wants to make motion to change by-laws and wonders if this would be a one-time exception. Sarah makes a motion to craft wording for by-laws to allow for consideration of applications in a semester after the funding request, given extenuating circumstances of GSO being unable to meet. Passes with unanimous vote. Sarah will work with Executive Board to write by-law.

Interim President Olukoga wonders asks about how this would affect past applicants. Sarah suggests applicants re-apply after we have rewritten the by-laws. Maggi suggests that wording includes “until new procedure is in place, must submit by the end of the semester that procedure is changed by first meeting when everything is back in order.” Treasurer Hwang asks if we can pass a by-law as GSO or if we need approval from Graduate School, or do we just inform them of our new procedure. Interim President Olukoga clarifies that students whose funds have been approved but did not receive a check request form should ask the Graduate School, as once an application is approved, it moves on to Graduate School.

Did we have any applications for the summer? How is the SGA handling applications during the summer, can we consider a policy that mirrors SGA's? Interim President Olukoga suggests a second semester meeting Treasurer Hwang suggests a meeting during the second week of August. PRO Hilliard wonders about students who have graduated. PRO Hilliard suggests she can get training done quickly to get the message out sooner. Interim President Olukoga agrees that Grad School should help get the message out. Interim President Olukoga asks about a meeting in two weeks.

Hilda asks about lack of GSO forms for those who have been approved, attended conferences. Treasurer Hwang will talk to Tanya this week. Interim President Olukoga suggests those students fill out the electronic version. In summer, we are only considering research, theses, and virtual conferences. Fillable PDF get out to students and post procedure for application so we can approve in two weeks' time. Sarah expresses that we need to be clear that is only for summer and for students enrolled in summer.

d. Petition for OPT continuance to President Trump

Interim President Olukoga brought up this issue with Executive Board members. Students at other universities have created this petition for OPT. Interim President Olukoga has an update that for now it is on hold and she can send more information to you if interested.

Maggi adds that The 705 interviewed Senator Cassidy and she brought up the J-1 visa concerns. His office is trying to work directly with embassies to assist with some of these issues. Maggi has contact information for his office if we want to send him more information (a letter or petition), Maggi can forward it to his office. Interim President Olukoga asks if we want to write a letter to Senator Cassidy. Maggi suggests we can share the information for volume. Sarah suggests we distribute the information on GSO Facebook. Maggi suggests providing the wording for constituents to contact the Senator's office. Maggi looks for input on the copy to give to PRO Hilliard to share. Interim President Olukoga shares in Zoom documents the OPT letter that has been approved.

PRO Hilliard adds that there are two training sessions for online, dates are not soon enough to accommodate an upcoming meeting (we won't be able to update website with second July meeting). Interim President Olukoga suggests we communicate the new procedure through GSO reps and Department Chairs if we do not have access to website. Meeting in two weeks, applications in before July 20? Interim President Olukoga wonders if two days is enough time for Treasurer Hwang to calculate budget and create spreadsheet. Next meeting scheduled July 22 at 5pm, by unanimous vote. PRO Hilliard will send invitations.

23. Other Advocacy/Concerns/Questions

PRO Hilliard asks about sending out digitized PDF to representatives, will work with Interim President Olukoga.

24. Announcements

25. Adjournment

Interim President Olukoga adjourns meeting at 5:28pm