

**Graduate Student Organization (GSO)**  
Spring 2021 General Meeting 1  
February 19 at 1:30pm | Location: [Zoom](#)

**Meeting Minutes**

**Pre-meeting:** 3-minute breakout room to meet fellow Department Representatives

**Tip:** Put your Department in your Zoom name, for example: "ARCH Scott"

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

President Sarah Smith calls meeting to order at 1:36 p.m.

**2. Attendance** [establish quorum: 50% +1 of current membership]

**3. President's Welcome**

President Sarah welcomes all the new department representatives and thanks all the proxies in attendance for attending on behalf of their department's representative.

**4. Message from Graduate School**

Sarah thanks all representatives for their participation in GSO and the great ideas that have come from the Teams conversation asking for our suggestions for Graduate Student Appreciation Week.

**5. President's Report:** Sarah Smith

- a. Vacancy for President at the end of semester, election to be held in April during Meeting 3

Sarah shared that she has truly enjoyed her time in the role. She is stepping down to focus on her academic duties. There will be other vacancies in the Executive Board of GSO this semester, as well. The organization's long-term goal is to fulfill the vacancies with students who have a year or more left to serve in the board. If you are interested in a position in the Executive Board, ask questions so we can help you understand each role.

**6. Vice President's Report:** Tolu Olukoga

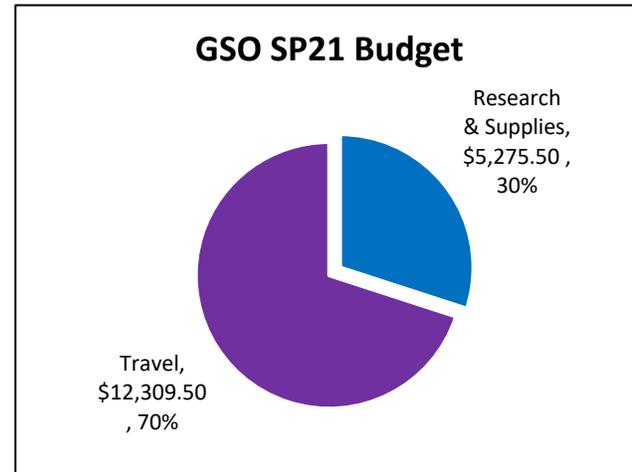
- a. Vacancy for Vice President starting immediately, election to be held this meeting (see New Business)

VP Tolu stated that she will be stepping down from the position and this will be her last meeting. She shared that the role of the VP for GSO is to support the President and serve graduate students and it is also a great opportunity. She expressed that she truly enjoyed her time in GSO and thanked everyone for the opportunity.

President Sarah thanked Tolu for serving GSO for the last couple of years and for her immense help in getting us closer to an online application process with a solution she helped to bring forward in summer 2020.

## 7. Treasurer's Report: Scott Dufreche

- a. Upcoming Funding Committee meeting: Monday, March 15, 2021 at 5pm
- b. Current GSO budget:
  - i. \$17,585.00 in new money from Spring 2021 fees. *Rollover amount from previous semesters to be confirmed.*
  - ii. Per Bylaws, 70% of budget is allocated to Travel (With and Without Academic Duties) and 30% to Research (Equipment & Supplies and Thesis/Dissertation printing)
- c. Reminders about applications:
  - i. GSO does not fund computer hardware or software -- solutions:
    - ask your faculty to apply for a [STEP grant](#)
    - GSO has expressed to the Dean of the Graduate School that students need access to programs to produce high-quality diagrams for theses/dissertations (specifically Adobe Illustrator and OriginLab)
  - ii. GSO does not fund books that are held at UL Dupré Library



Treasurer Scott is awaiting providing a larger amount for the starting budget of the semester until we receive confirmation of GSO's account balance, but it is likely that GSO will have plenty of available funding this semester. Thus, spreadsheet presented today to GSO reflects only new money collected from this semester's student fees, out of an abundance of caution.

There have been a couple of applications that have been rejected due to the resources being available on campus or equipment that cannot be purchased due to bylaws.

Rep. Maggi stated that in the past funding has been approved for applications that were approved for examinations that were not required for licensure as some Education programs include a requirement to take Praxis exams as part of comprehensive exam process.

President Sarah and Treasurer Scott agreed that there is a need to further research the funding for exams and/or broaden the professional development category that will fund exams.

Sarah thanked Scott for his commitment to further understanding the role of treasurer as he becomes familiar with the role.

## 8. Secretary's Report: Patricia Arias Hunt

- a. Subgroup for Community Service

Secretary Patricia would like to investigate opportunities for graduate students to come together and volunteer on campus or within the community.

- b. Need for additional resources / templates for Department Representatives and funding applicants?

We will be looking into providing a sample letter for applicants who are requesting funding, to make the expectations of what to include clearer.

## 9. Public Relations' Report: Hilda Oforio-Addo [absent]

### a. Upcoming Communications Committee meeting:

Public Relations Officer was not able to attend the meeting. President Sarah stated that Hilda would like to meet next Friday to discuss ways to engage with the communications committee, manage the Facebook, and brainstorm making a GSO commercial with the help of the Graduate School's videographer. If you are interested in joining, please email GSO.

## 10. Old Business

## 11. New Business

### a. Vote on Funding Applications for General Meeting 1 [see budget spreadsheet]

- i. "Travel" With Academic Duties Appropriations
- ii. Research & Supplies Appropriations

President Sarah presented to the meeting the funding opportunities and categories that are being discussed in the future. Rep. Maggi stated that in the past they have funded the Praxis for education. Rep. Elizabeth clarified that the exam that Kinesiology would like funding for is related to the research category. Sarah explains further that the Bylaws *do* currently allow for expenses related to *comp* exams, but in this case the student needs to take the exam in order to secure the internship tied to his future thesis research. If the Council wants to consider this application as under the umbrella of "Expenses directly related to thesis or dissertation research," it may. It is just a case of the Bylaws not currently, explicitly addressing professional certifications or licensure exams. When they met earlier this week, the Funding Committee talked through a potential Bylaw to address this area, which appears later on this agenda.

Rep. Victoria shared that in Education there are individuals who must take all levels of the Praxis and others only required individual versions of it. According to Maggi, historically GSO has funded the Praxis for students (one time only, as in, you cannot apply repeated for GSO funding if you do not pass), without requiring the results of the exam. Sarah stated that in the case of exams we may want to clarify if a passing score would be necessary for funding?

Motion passes to remove the one application that requests funding for testing from current appropriations discussion. Motion passes to bulk vote and approve all other appropriations as indicated in budget spreadsheet (excluding the one testing application), approving all other applications as recommended by the Funding Committee's spreadsheet.

### b. *Nomination and election* of Vice President

- i. Role of Vice President, from Bylaws: "Shall serve in the absence of the President, assist the President with assigned responsibilities, and serve as the chair and ex-officio member of the Advocacy Committee formed under the provision of Section IV."
- ii. Vice President requirement, from Bylaws: One semester of previous GSO Department Representative experience (excluding summer) -or- bypass requirement with 2/3 majority vote.
- iii. Nominations from the floor

President Sarah presented the requirements for the position of Vice President, expressing the need for a student who can stay with GSO for a year (or more, if possible). Secretary Patricia self-nominated herself to fulfill the position of Vice President. Due to no other nominations, Patricia will take the position of Vice President.

- c. *Nomination and election of Secretary (if vacant)*
  - i. Role of Secretary, from Bylaws: "Shall take and record the minutes of the General Council meetings, maintain the file of approved minutes, and aid the other executive officers in their duties."
  - ii. Secretary requirement, from Bylaws: One semester of previous GSO Department Representative experience (excluding summer) -or- bypass requirement with 2/3 majority vote.
  - iii. Nominations from the floor

Because Patricia is now Vice President, GSO needs to fulfil a vacancy for Secretary. President Sarah and Secretary Patricia shared insight into the role of Secretary. Rep. Liz self-nominated to fulfill the role of Secretary until she graduates in May. Due to no other nominations, Rep. Liz will serve as Secretary.

- d. *Introduction of Bylaw proposal for certification exams or licensure:*
  - i. "Funding requests up to \$100.00 will be considered for reimbursement of expenses associated with professional certification or licensure exam registration fees. These applications will not be heard until the 2nd meeting of the semester, after requests for travel with or without academic duties and requests for research equipment and supplies and thesis/dissertation/graduation project production. (Should the meeting take place in the summer semester, these requests will be heard after all other categories). The funding request will not be released by the President to the proper funding channels until the passing exam result is received. The proof of passing exam result must be received no later than one week before the third meeting of the semester of exam. Failure to receive proof of passing exam result before this deadline will result in the application being voided. Funds coming available as a result will be used to fund applications from the waiting list in a first come, first serve manner based on the order they were received. If you cannot produce proof of a passing exam result before the aforementioned deadline, please contact the Executive Board; the Executive Board reserves the right to extend this deadline for applicants deemed to have extenuating circumstances."

Rep. Maggi posted in the Zoom chat the current text on the Bylaws regarding funding for exams and study materials needed for exam. Rep. MaKensey stated that in her department there are certifications and there might be a need to clarify or expand the bylaws. Rep. John Miller motion to clearly state the current bylaw rather than introducing the proposed bylaw, motion passes. Maggi motioned to approve the Kinesiology application to fund exam required for research/licensure, motion passes. The application will be funded, and the individual will be contacted. [GSO Funding Committee will work on creating wording that supports current system rather than the above proposition that puts restrictions on dollar amount, passing result, etc.]

## 12. Other Advocacy/Concerns/Questions

- a. 5-minute breakout room: What unmet needs can GSO assist you and your department's students with this semester? (see [Form](#))
- b. Potential for GSO to fund students' participation in [NAGPS South Central](#) virtual regional conference in April (through "Other Funding - \$500" category)?

Reps. Erin and John expressed their interest in GSO funding students' participation in the event.

- c. Discussion of Bylaw proposal for professional or academic organization membership dues?

Rep. Patricia and Scott shared that in their department the funding for academic organization memberships will greatly benefit since their students do not apply for other funding categories.

## 13. Announcements

- a. Graduate School Programming: [Financial Planning for Graduate Students Pilot](#)

- b. Putting the “FUN” in GSO’s Friday FUND-day meetings!
- c. After this meeting, GSO will follow-up via email to Reps with notes you can relay to your departments’ students.
- d. The next GSO General Meeting will be held on March 19, 2021. The deadline for applications to be considered for that meeting (all categories) is March 12, 2021.

**14. Adjournment**

President Sarah Smith adjourned the meeting at 2:37 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Patricia Arias Hunt, GSO Secretary.

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GSO Department Representatives List for Meeting Attendance:

red = absent, green = present, gray = vacant

Accounting	English
Architecture	Geosciences
Biology	History
Business Administration	Industrial Technology
Chemical Engineering (proxy)	Kinesiology
Civil Engineering	Mathematics (proxy)
Communication	Mechanical Engineering
Communicative Disorders	Modern Languages (proxy)
Computing & Informatics	Music
Counselor Education	Nursing
Criminal Justice (proxy)	Petroleum Engineering
Educational Curriculum & Instruction	Physics
Educational Foundations & Leadership	Psychology
Electrical Engineering	