

Attendance:

Abdelrahman Garbie, Ahmed Hossain, Alica Merie Wilson, Benjamin Vidrine, Clement Okolo, David Squires, Enwesi Onyeka Efemena, Faryal Atif, Grayson Stepanek, John Olajire, Pierre Olivier-Pire, Sarbagya Kafle, Sumona Hoque Mumu, Washia Iffat Karion.

(9 Representatives, 4 Graduate Students, 1 Professor)

Meeting Started: 4:08 PM

Meeting Ended: 4:59 PM

Total Duration: 51 Minutes

Welcome

- Opening remarks from Faryal Atif, Vice President of the GSO and Advocacy Committee Chair

Introduction to the Advocacy Committee PowerPoint Presentation

- Discussion of What Advocacy is
 - "...Represent the needs and concerns of our members to the university administration."
 - "The GSO President serves on the University Graduate Council, The Graduate Appeals Committee, etc."
 - "Student representatives from graduate departments meet regularly each semester to discuss issues pertaining to their represented Graduate students."
- What is an Institutional Advocacy Committee
 - It is a committee dedicated to "Provide direction to the GSC in its operations as much as it overlaps with social justice issues and to determine the problems and areas where improvement..." can be made to the campus's systems of operation
- The UL Lafayette Advocacy Committee
 - Chaired by the Vice President
 - Meet Three Times a Semester (Dates/Locations change per semester)
- Specific Purpose of the Committee
 - Represents any advocacy issues of the graduate students of UL Lafayette (Personal, Academic, etc.)

- Objectives/By-laws of the GSO

Effective communication with the general graduate student populace

Advocating student's concerns in General Council Meetings of the GSO

Write to official University channels and work with them for the resolution of any advocacy concerns.

- The Anonymous Advocacy Committee Form

Available on our GSO Website to fill out at any time

Completely Anonymous Reporting is an option at all times

Advocacy concerns are heard directly by School Staff at the General Meeting

Dr. Farmer-Kaiser/Dr. De Mahy

Dr. Farmer-Kaiser, as Dean of the Graduate School, also follows a strict open-door policy from her office in the Student Union, Suite 169.

- Care Network

Links to resources available on campus

Food Dist. Centers, Housing Agencies, Health Supports, Assault Counseling, etc.

- Swipe Out Hunger (sodexomyway.com)

Access to free meal swipes for students who require access to food from the Student Union's Dining Hall.

- Open Discussion

Guilbeau Center for Public History

Hardware and Software for Graduate Students (5th Floor Griffin Hall)

-Podcast/ Audio Technology

-3D Printing

-ArcGIS, Zotero, etc.

Office of Financial Aid

Assists in finding all loans and scholarships available for students.

Student Government Association

Money Loans Available via that avenue as well

(\$500 for local, \$1000 for international, \$200 for conferences)

Website available

Guest Speaker: Dr. David Squires

- “Sensitive Language in classroom teaching and social settings.”
- About the speaker

“Dr. David Squires is an associate professor at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He teaches American literature and writes about the cultural legacy shared by information science and modern media. His current research project offers the first account of how the early information sciences developed a critical, yet mutual, relationship with neoimperialist institutions between 1880 and 1950. He has published on poetry, pulp fiction, library science, racial violence, and autism.”

- Presentation

Dr. Squires shares from personal experience how different each classroom is, with the caveat that each should be inclusive, engaging, and safe for all involved. To achieve these three goals, he discusses the necessity of talking about race within a class and how to engage with students equitably. This necessity and engagement faces complications via the historical and cultural differences found in all students’ lives. Dr. Squires also shares five roles that will assist in these complications.

Five Roles:

1. Just do not say slurs (Even within a piece of text)
2. Avoid Biased Language
3. Use Historical Language Historically
4. Learn Debates
5. Be Open to Correction

- Q/A

-A member of the committee shared their own experience using biased words from their own culture, reaffirming the need to reflect on our own cultural upbringing to ensure a safe, productive classroom

-Q: “How do you navigate students or colleagues in the community who are part of marginalized communities and use slurs?”

A: Simply explain your personal stance to not use those words

- Adjourned