

1. Approval of minutes from last GSU Council meeting
  - a. Josh Mason, President of GSU (*Biological Sciences*)
  - b. Do we have a motion to approve?
  - c. Andrew Schranck (Civil & Environmental Engineering & Earth Sciences) Yes
  - d. (did not get name of student) seconds this motion
2. Approval of GSU Constitution (second approval)
  - a. Constitution was approved
3. Caitlin Smith (*English*) had a question regarding the Conference Presentation Grant and how we are choosing, what's our priority.
  - a. Bridgette Drummond, Co-Vice President of GSU (*Biological Sciences*): We're torn between giving out less grants for more money or more grants for lesser amounts.
  - b. Josh: All grad students pay the \$72 activity fee and the average award is always two to three times what you turn in.
  - c. Bridgette: It depends on how many apply each month. It's a quality process, not just because we have more money.
  - d. Andrew: asked a questions regarding amounts of funds requested as to the amount of applications submitted.
  - e. Bridgette gave some numbers for this past review.
  - f. Kate Bermingham (*Political Science*): There seems to be a repeated problem. Lots of grad students trying to get money early in the semester...
  - g. Bridgette: We've started a sort of rolling system. We had a ton of conferences for November, approximately 39 applied.
  - h. Kate: It seems like we could do some research. I'm also curious about Go Grants.
  - i. Josh: That wasn't GSU funding.
  - j. Mimi Beck (*Grad Student Life, Program Director*): Mimi explained Go Grants and how this began. More information on the Grad Life website.
  - k. Josh: We will introduce our guest speakers at this time and come back to this discussion.
4. Guest Speakers
  - a. Karen Kennedy (*Director of Housing*)
  - b. Heather Rakoczy Russell (*Associate VP for Residential Life*)
  - c. Two attachments were sent out for review prior to the meeting
    - i. Letter dated 6/17/14 addressed to University Village & Cripe Street residents
      1. Informing all that University Village, Cripe Street Apartments & O'Hara-Grace Townhouse will all close at the end of the Spring 2018 semester
      2. At end of Spring 2018 semester, the plan is to broaden the population that is served at Fischer Graduate Residences.
        - a. Married and parenting students will be welcomed to live in designated sections of Fischer.

- b. All students currently (6/2014) residing in the facilities set to close will be offered grandfathered lease rates in Fischer in the summer of 2018.
    - ii. Letter dated 7/12/16 addressed to members of the Fischer O'Hara-Grace community
      - 1. Informing all of some adjustments the University is making regarding day-to-day operations at Fischer O'Hara Grace (FOG) Residences
        - a. The University will partner with Bradley Company, a premier commercial real estate firm, to provide property & facility management services at FOG.
        - b. This will transition over in the Fall of 2016 semester
        - c. Bradley will assume management of maintenance of the buildings & grounds at FOG, including apartment repairs, cleaning, snow removal, landscaping & apartment assignments
        - d. Permanent, on-site presence (of Bradley) at Fischer Community Center by Jan of 2017
  - d. Heather talked about three options
    - i. Married & singles both living at Fischer in designated sections
    - ii. The university purchasing new or existing properties
    - iii. Neither of the above but reinvesting in grad student programming & services
- e. Sudip Vhaduri (*Computer Science & Engineering*) had a question regarding first option
- f. Heather: There would be a married area & a single area. Separation but still shared common space.
- g. Niraja Suresh, Quality of Life Co-Chair (*Biological Sciences*): I see some real concerns with the third option - if I had to rent an apartment as an international student. I also live at The Overlook so I know the process and know how it works. Affiliated housing program is a good idea.
- h. Heather: We want to be sure that we don't lose great students by not helping to make the transition.
- i. Karen: We made sure that The Overlook welcomes students and doesn't ask for things. (i.e. driver's license, etc.)
- j. Rob Mowry (Sociology): You're presenting in a tentative tone but the letter says...through 2017-18.
- k. Heather: The Overlook went over very well. It was filled before it was finished. We may do all options. Not mutually exclusive.
- l. Natalie Sargent, Health Care Chair (*History*): If it isn't broke, don't fix it. What's the broke piece at FOG to transition to Bradley? Rent at Fischer is \$630 per month. Base rent at The Overlook is \$850 for a studio in South Bend, Indiana.

- m. Heather: (that is correct)...Mostly Law & MBA students are in The Overlook. We want to try to find something affordable for our grad students. We want to hear from you. The Overlook is not the answer for everyone.
- n. Karen: I don't think anything was broken at FOG. There have long been challenges. Roommate matching, types of leases offered, etc. It was originally modeled for undergrads. With Bradley managing them, we're able to be creative & have systems that flow better for grad students. They do apartment management really well. We support students really well.
- o. Natalie: Is the Notre Dame power plant an issue? Not getting power from them?
- p. Heather: No, Bradley has their expertise in many things, etc.
- q. Robbin Forsyth (*Art, Art History, & Design*): I would challenge you that you're not being creative enough. I bought a house in South Bend and my payment & utility costs are under \$900 a month. I'd highly suggest single family homes. I'd put grad students into neighborhoods that could be potential faculty, etc.
- r. Heather: It's not a concept that's lost on us. Heather went on to discuss married with families living in communities with other married with families for reasons such as babysitting & playmates.
- s. Robbin: (how about) flip houses every five years when a grad student moves out.
- t. Antonis Anastasopoulos, Quality of Life Co-Chair (*Computer Science & Engineering*): There is very small integration between Notre Dame and South Bend. Would it make sense to create a survey to all grad students?
- u. Karen: In the past, a Grad Student Life survey was sent out. Refers to Mimi.
- v. Mimi: Still working through the data, but learned where students live, were they satisfied, etc. This is the beginning of a much bigger conversation with us.
- w. Heather: Grad students a few years ago, were flocking to Mishawaka. Driven by the affordable piece.
- x. Victoria Makuru (*Biological Sciences*): Re: International students, FOG was dependable and safe when I arrived here straight from the airplane.
- y. Heather: The third plan has to do with services. Married & single students may be living at Fischer or that there's an affiliated housing and there is a contact person for when international students arrive. It's a live conversation - what are the things that you need when you arrive. Two populations we must keep in mind: married with children and international students. These (two populations) need the most help and services. Whether these services would be embedded in FOG or would there be... not a question of "if" but "how".
- z. Karen: We hear of FOG as a landing pad. Easy, safe, gets you on campus. What can we do to provide some landing pad services in other affiliated areas to increase the landing pad concept.
- aa. Rachel Yonker (*Philosophy*): I own a house and it's the best part of my experience here. I'd advise you to look further into this.
- bb. Karen: We find in the survey data...a lot of Ph.D. students do choose to purchase homes in the area. We have a preferred realtor in the community.
- cc. Rachel: There is a grant for first time home buyers.

- dd. Mimi: Between 15 - 20% of grad students are home owners. Cressy & Everett are the preferred realtor services.
- ee. Question (didn't get student's name): Do you have the demographics breakdown of homeowners (within grad student population)?
- ff. Didn't hear response. Maybe this information is still being looked at from Grad Student Life survey?
- gg. Shawn Cook (*ESTEEM*): I live in Granger. My wife was scared to live in South Bend. I think Robbin is onto something.
- hh. Robbin: There is more value in existing properties in the city.
- ii. Sarah Dietz (*Physics*): I feel there is a desire for something like The Overlook but more affordable.
- jj. Kate Bermingham (*Political Science*): Has there been any research into how affiliated properties have affected surrounding real estate...will it artificially drive up cost of other properties...cost is clearly a concern.
- kk. Karen: I think the resource piece is huge. In terms of The Overlook, I don't have a quick answer on that. Properties around The Overlook are primarily undergrads.
- ll. Keith Feldman (*Computer Science & Engineering*): I've been here a decade (as an undergrad & grad) and not many have singles or studios around. Has there been any talk about leveraging any affiliate housing on sizes?
- mm. Karen: Bradley will work on being able to match roommates, etc. In terms of affiliating apartment to lease the bed instead of....(didn't hear comment)
- nn. Keith: Some are too expensive. People can't afford (this cost) around here.
- oo. Greg Cruess (*Theology*): You can't replace proximity by closing these places. Many families only have one car or no car or no driver's license.
- pp. Sarah: I live in Clover Village. They might be changing to an undergrad way...switching from unfurnished to furnished. More catered to undergrads.
- qq. Andrew Schranck (*Civil & Environmental Engineering & Earth Sciences*): There are two properties sort of close....Angela and Michigan St. building and another one is north of Angela and East of 23, sort of hidden back there. Have you looked at these?
- rr. Karen: We have close relationships with both of those management companies. Conversations are very live with a number of complexes in the area.
- ss. Aryanne de Silva (*Psychology*): My question is a timeline question....the three complexes being funnelled into Fischer...will (there be) services? And when will they be available?
- tt. Heather: Related to the Bradley Company at FOG, have been meeting regularly and will take over in January of 2017. The current rector and his staff will take a step back and will be intentional about what the services look like going forward. By end of this academic year, we hope to have a proposal in advance of other complexes closing.
- uu. Sudip Vhaduri (*Computer Science & Engineering*): Regarding married families at FOG...will have both bedrooms...and if singles and married living in FOG...(didn't hear all of his question).

- vv. Heather: Fischer won't be as affordable as University Village was. No subsidy at this point but will provide other options.
- ww. Leo Guardado (*International Peace Studies*): Buildings go up here all the time, why not now?
- xx. Heather: No, the land is not spoken for yet. There are an abundance of options in South Bend that students are voting for as well as if we were to build new. It wouldn't be affordable and that's the most important thing to grad students. Off the table, if not affordable.
5. Josh: Thank you to our guest speakers. Let's put the budget back on the table. Do we have a motion to approve the budget?
- Antonis: Yes
  - Robbin: seconds this motion
6. Josh talked about Executive Board report that is in the agenda.
7. Bridgette said that the concession stand made approximately \$1100 - \$1200.
8. Leo: Regarding the budget. We have no comparison from last year. Maybe give us a copy of last year's budget to compare. Maybe this will prevent further questions.
- Josh: I think we have access to last year's budget. We asked every chair what we thought the needs were for their committees. They came back with a number and we met that.
9. Committee Chairs summarized their reports
10. A comment was made regarding last year's Professional Development Expo being much more successful mainly because it was the first year that headshots were offered.
- Kristen Johnson, Professional Development Co-Chair (*Chemistry & Biochemistry*): We're trying to figure out what would be a driving factor. This year we didn't have a "new" thing. Timing was close to mid-terms. The information is also present at the orientation events. How can we produce material that is a driving force for grad students.
  - Andrea Pena-Vasquez (*Political Science*): I don't know much about the PD Expo. I know it's to give information but is there a broad spread of information to people going into all different areas, not just academia? Marketing it even more intensely? Maybe a bigger effort to market it?
  - Aastha Nigam, Professional Development Co-Chair (*Computer Science & Engineering*): That's a good point.
11. Niraja Suresh, Quality of Life (*Biological Sciences*): talked about an idea that was brought to the Q of L committee regarding an on-campus bike-share program.
- Robbin: Security Police has a building full of bikes. Seems like the start up process shouldn't be that expensive. (we can) Train people how to do basic maintenance. We could set something up for much cheaper.
  - Will Cernanec (*Sociology*): It would make way more sense for a parking lot for those who use cars everyday as opposed to twice a year.
  - Mimi: A few years ago, that was going to happen and then the Wellness Center was built. (they) Were willing and ready.
12. Shinjini Chattopadhyay, FOG Rep (*English*): Is it possible to arrange a Sunday shuttle during the winter from FOG to a grocery store?

- a. Niraja: I'm currently working on this. The issue is that the van isn't offered anymore or it's not available. We're trying to set this up.
  - b. Mimi: Campus Ministry has vans.
  - c. Niraja: (we would still) Need drivers.
  - d. Sudip: Carpool? I don't see this anymore.
  - e. Nicole Schiavone (*Chemistry & Biochemistry*): When they divided the Bulla lot...grad students still are parking with the undergrads that leave their cars there. We have lots of concerns.
13. Josh: We'll take about seven minutes to do break out sessions with the committees.
  14. Are there any extra comments or announcements?
  15. Caitlyn Smith (*English*): Can we get JW Chen's next time?
  16. Josh: They were over budget so we went under budget this time.
  17. Margie Housley, Quality of Life (*English*): I'd take pizza over Jimmy John's
  18. Josh: We'll get a more detailed budget to pass out next meeting.
  19. Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.