

MINUTES

Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies

November 22, 2021, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. called meeting

238 GLC and Zoom

Present: Montasir Abbas, Kayla Alward, Nancy Bodenhorn, Kai Jun Chew (proxy for Alina Valop), Christina DiMarino, Marcia Feuerstein, Chip Frazier, Maruf Hoque, Jack Leff (proxy for Jordan Westcott), Kaitlyn Malewicz, Roan Parrish, Ashley Shew, Aimée Surprenant (ex officio), Hannah Jane Upson, Scott Weimer, Pengtao Yue.

Absent with notification: Coy Allen, Barbara Hoopes, Rachel Holloway (ex officio), Alina Valop, Jordan Wescott.

Absent without notification: Laura Belmonte, Amanda Covey, Joe Eifert, Hannah Parks, Nathaniel Porter, Cliff Shaffer, Richard Vari, Tyler Walters (ex officio).

Visitors and invited guests: Sarah Aadahl , Janice Austin, John Barbish, Dhriliman Barman, Francesca Battista, Cassie Becker, Ben Beiter, Upali Bhattacharya, Amanda Burroughs, Eve Coleman, Kennedy Coyne, Hannah Cunningham, Riley DeHority, Rile DeHority, Nathan Dragon, Kevin Edgar, Paul Emmons, Amy Ernstes, Parisa Farzeen, Margaret Fernandez, Matthew Flores, Alice Fox, Keri Friedman, Caleb Gore, Alayna Graves, Cathy Grimes, Andrew Gunsch, Ariel Heminger, Rene Hernandez, Bill Huckle, Xakin Ramirez Isunza, Kayla Kester, Sami Towsif Khan, Kevin Kish, Noah Lyons, Luther McPherson, Haley Michel, Phillip Miskovic, danielle mullins, Aidan Murphy, April Myers, Faith Myers, Shaga Navabpour, Kim O'Rourke, Darshit Patel, Annie Patrick, Laura Gil Pineda, JoAnna Platzter, Kase Poling, Anusha Prasad, Chloe Robertson, Jacob Robinson, Morva Saaty, Malle Schilling, Arulmurugan Senthilnathan, shannon sullivan, Lauren Surface, Sophia Vicente, Keegan Walkup, Scott Weimer, Damien Williams.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Feuerstein at 4:00p.m. A quorum was verified.

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Old Business

Dr. Feuerstein opened discussion on GPSS Resolution 2021-22B (CGPSP Resolution 2021-22D) Resolution to Institute a Living Wage for Graduate Students. Mr. Leff made a motion to approve the resolution; the motion was seconded by Ms. Alward.

Dean Surprenant motioned to amend the resolution in the “Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved” paragraph to:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the university commits to creating a task force to develop recommendations toward providing graduate students on assistantships a living wage, as delineated by the documents in Appendix 2, as the baseline pay rate and taking into account the additional costs incurred by international students. This task force (see Appendix 3 for our recommended charge) will be charged with providing a more concrete cost estimate, financial implementation plan, provide access to data not publicly available, and draft a budget proposal to include this increased cost in the academic year 2023-2024 budget. The majority of this task force membership (at least 51%) should be graduate students (with a particular focus on international students) nominated by the Graduate and Professional Student Senate and representing at least three different colleges (including a member representing programs outside of Blacksburg) to offer a wide range of perspectives and expertise. Other members should be relevant stakeholders including, but not limited to, budget and finance representation, graduate school representation, Cranwell representation, and faculty members with relevant expertise in the equity/political economy issues raised by this resolution.

The motion was seconded by Dr. Bodenhorn. The amendment was not approved.

Mr. Leff motioned to amend the resolution in the “Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved” paragraph to:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the university commits to provide graduate students on assistantship a living wage, as evidenced by the documents in appendix 2, as the baseline pay rate and taking into account the additional costs incurred by international

students. This task force (see Appendix 3 for our recommended charge) will be charged with providing a more concrete cost estimate, financial implementation plan, provide access to data not publicly available, and draft a budget proposal to include this increased cost in the academic year 2023-2024 budget. The majority of this task force membership (at least 51%) should be graduate students (with a particular focus on international students) nominated by the Graduate and Professional Student Senate and representing at least three different colleges (including a member representing programs outside of Blacksburg) to offer a wide range of perspectives and expertise. Other members should be relevant stakeholders including, but not limited to, budget and finance representation, Graduate School representation, Cranwell representation, and faculty members with relevant expertise in the equity/political economy issues raised by this resolution.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Alward, and the motion passed.

Dr. Frazier motioned to amend the resolution to change the fourth Whereas paragraph to:

WHEREAS, we know from this data (summarized in Appendix 1) that graduate students are facing dire circumstances and so further inaction towards addressing it constitutes neglectful complicity through preventable hunger, lack of medical care, and graduate students being unable to afford housing; and

The motion was seconded by Mr. Leff, and the motion passed.

Mr. Leff moved to approve the amended resolution, the motion was seconded, and the motion passed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/

Janice E. Austin

On behalf of Aimée Surprenant, Ph.D.

Dean for Graduate Education