



GSA Executive Council Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2021
3:30-4:45pm
Zoom

This meeting is moderated by GSA President Shayna Bennett. Minutes of the meeting have been prepared by GSA Internal Communications Officer Jordan Collignon.

Members of Executive Council in Attendance

- Shayna Bennett (President)
- Benny Nguyen (Internal Vice President)
- Zunaira Iqbal (External Vice President)
- Jordan Collignon (Internal Communications Officer)
- Karla Seijas (Solidarity Officer)
- Ritwika VPS (International Affairs Officer)
- Larisa Gavrilova (Climate Diversity & Equity Officer)
- Betsabel Chicana (Legislative Affairs Officer)

UCGPC Proposal (3:34 – 3:39pm)

- UCGPC is currently labeled as a social welfare organization which has significant lobbying ability. However, the UCGPC doesn't lobby as much as expected for a social welfare organization. Becoming classified as a non-profit organization will affect how the UCGPC pays taxes and will not affect current operations in the organization.
- Will changing the status of the UCGPC from social justice organization to a non-profit impact us, specifically, how we pay the UCGPC? It was made clear that no changes to membership dues will be made.
- Zunaira has moved to approve the UCGPC proposal and was seconded by Shayna. The approval passes unanimously from the officers present.
 - 6 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 2 not present
- Since this proposal involves the GSA as a whole sending approval, this is something the DA should be involved with as well. Benny will solicit votes from DA members on this proposal.

Updates on Diversity Training (3:39 – 3:46pm)

- Larisa talked with Cathy at CETL about having a separate workshop for Diversity Training, but it was mentioned that having a separate workshop would detract from the events that CETL already has. Fortunately, a compromise was made. Larisa and Taylor, who host the CETL institute sessions this semester, will be adding a seventh session at the tail end of the series that focuses on anti-racist pedagogy. Eileen Camfield will be included as a speaker for this session. The estimated dates of this seventh session are May 2nd and 3rd.
- Asmeret replied to Larisa today and has expressed interest in assisting development of Diversity Training. Larisa and Adam will be working more on development in the coming weeks.

Social Media & Graphic Design Specialist Proposal (3:46 – 3:58pm)

- During the year, it is apparent that the EC struggled to decide who is in charge of advertising, posting updates about events and other things on social media, and creating flyers to supplement GSA events. Last semester, it was agreed that the event hosts would pass on all the event information to a few officers who would then post to social media, the GSA website, and send emails. The above, coupled with a lack of timely communication to these individuals and confusion on who to contact has caused this workflow to collapse.
- In response to the issues the EC currently faces with event advertisement, we have a new proposal for an officer who will take charge of all advertisements over social media and will be the go-to person for making flyers and other graphic designs that the GSA develops. This officer will also manage all social media accounts, assist the Internal Communications officer on the design of the website and assist other GSOs on campus with their graphic design needs.
- The proposal will require a Constitutional amendment to add a new officer to the EC, and a bylaws amendment to approve the responsibilities of this officer.
- How will the GSA fill this role? Will it be done in the upcoming election? Since the Constitution is amended during the election, we cannot have this position up for election until the officer position in the EC is made official. This position will have to be filled some time after the election through an appointment process. Ideally, this would be done through late spring-early summer.
- Shayna has moved to approve the proposal for a new officer to be added to the GSA and has been seconded. The motion passes unanimously by all those present.
 - 7 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 not present

Undocumented Affairs Officer Proposal (3:58 – 4:07pm)

- The International Affairs officer's aim is to bring to the table the needs of the international student population. At this moment, no such position in the GSA exists for the undocumented student population. A proposal was drafted to include a new officer in the GSA designated to address the needs of undocumented students enrolled at UC Merced.
- Ritu had a conversation with Service for Undocumented Students (SUDS) about this proposal. SUDS is happy to partner with the GSA on this effort. They think it's a good opportunity to have this officer in place.
- Encouraging students with mixed status to apply for the officer position is recommended as these individuals may be a part of families who are undocumented and thus have experience through this connection.
- The name "Undocumented Affairs" officer was discussed, but SUDS believes the name is quite appropriate as it stands. The idea should be that this person should speak to the experience of the community, and the officer name suits it.
- There was a discussion on how this role can be filled. Similar to the Social Media Specialist, someone will have to be appointed after the election. However, it is possible for SUDS to work with us on nominating an individual. The method will need to be decided before the end of the election. Otherwise, we will include the officer in the appointment call along with the Social Media Specialist.
- Similarly, a Constitutional amendment is required to add a new officer and a bylaws amendment is required to officiate the responsibilities of the officer.
- A motion was made to approve the proposal for adding the Undocumented Affairs officer and was seconded. The motion passed unanimously among the officers present.
 - 7 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 not present.

Discuss GSO and SEF (4:07 – 4:22pm)

- The GSO and SEF applications were due on February 1st. There are four applications for the GSO fund, and three applications for the SEF fund.
- The Travel Award application has expired for the first cycle and an announcement should be made soon.
- The remainder of the discussion was tabled for later since Quy is not present.

Discuss and Vote on Spring Awards (4:22 – 5:15pm)

- In this session, we will work on approving the process for each of the awards we will be offering this year. There are four awards for consideration; the meaning and expectation behind each award should be clear and distinguishable from each other.
- Each of the awards focuses on helping the community, a significant overlap that is difficult to separate into four different awards.
- The Community Service award should honor students who have consistently volunteered for organizations and demonstrate outstanding commitment toward bettering the community. The Leadership, Social Justice, and Mentorship awards are more specific in the realm of community involvement. A difficulty that arose is how we can gauge a student's involvement in these activities (how long, how much of an impact, supporting evidence, etc.).
- How can students be nominated? Can they self-nominate or have others nominate them? We can allow students to self-nominate for each award except the Mentorship award. Furthermore, nominations can be made from anyone in the UC Merced community.
- How can nominations be submitted? It was recommended that we create a form on our website or Google and have nominators submit the text here instead of emailing a bunch of documents. It was also recommended that any required documentation for each nominee be limited to greatly reduce the amount of the work for the GSA and the nominee.
- How many awards should be offered? Originally the plan was to have eight recipients: two recipients for each of the four awards. It will cost \$2,000 in the GSA budget to offer eight awards. A suggestion was made to cut the number of awards in half, and instead have one recipient for each award. The remaining \$1,000 can be used to fund the same awards for the next academic year.
- Due to time and with less officers present, a vote on the process was not held in this meeting and will instead be done through an absentee voting form. Details are on the next section.

Recap and Action Items

- The EC has approved the proposal for UCGPC to officially become a non-profit organization. The DA will be voting on this proposal as well.
- The EC has approved a proposal for adding a new officer: The Social Media and Graphic Design Specialist. The EC has approved adding a constitutional amendment to include this new officer position and will be added to the ballot for the spring election. The responsibilities will be added to the new bylaws draft which will be sent to the DA.

- The EC has approved a proposal for adding a second officer: The Undocumented Affairs Officer. This officer will serve the undocumented community and act as the liaison between the GSA and SUDS. The EC has approved adding a constitutional amendment to include this new officer position and will be added to the ballot for the spring election. The responsibilities will be added to the new bylaws draft which will be sent to the DA.
- The EC must vote on the process for distributing the spring awards. No final decision was made in this meeting, but a vote should be held before the next meeting so that the EC has time to further develop its strategy. EC members will vote using an online form before the start of the next meeting. There are three items that need a vote:
 - Does the EC plan on moving forward with offering the four types of awards as discussed this semester?
 - Does the EC plan on have one or two recipients for each of the four awards? Equivalently, does the EC plan on spending \$1,000 or \$2,000 for the awards?
 - If the EC votes to approve having one recipient per award, does the EC plan on using the remaining \$1,000 to fund next year's award cycle?

Meeting adjourned at 5:15pm.

The first General Membership meeting will be on Wednesday, February 3rd from 4-5pm.

The next Executive Council meeting will be on Tuesday, February 16th from 3:30-4:45pm.