**Graduate Student Senate- January Minutes**

**Call to Order**

* 3:02PM

**Roll Call**

* Quorum achieved

**Approval of Minutes**

* Minutes Stand Approved

**Speaker(s)- President Rogers**

**Address by President Rogers**

* President Rogers was joined by Katie Stygles and Glenn Davis
* BGSU is an R2 University with a balanced educational mission. BGSU has less financial resources than R1 universities
* Regarding stipends, meal swipes, fee waivers, health insurance
  + In the past BGSU has tried different models to support students. One such model was to ensure the total number of Gas with the allowance for variable amount of financial support.
  + In part some of the challenges involved with the issues include a low amount of support from the state of Ohio. The governor proposed a 3% increase in State Share of Instruction (SSI), but eh legislature only passed a 1% per year increase for the next two years. The state has also limited some of the ways BGSU and other institutions can generate revenue. Additionally, enrollment for the graduate programs has been below the targets which impacts state funding
  + BGSU is primarily a tuition funded institution with only 22%of the budget being funded by SSI
  + BGSU is continuing to try to find a solution to the issues and has been working with the provost and Graduate College dean.
* Regarding meal swipes, initially the meal swipes were for faculty and staff as a benefit during the pandemic/Covid. This was in a token of appreciation in response to a lack of pay increases. Recently Gas have been added to this program.
* Regarding the Master Plan, there are two forums in the next two weeks. January 25th at 5PM in the BTSU theater, and January 29th at 10AM in the BTSU theater. This is a long-term process that will likely take 10 or more years before being completed. This round of the Master plan is the 2nd round of this type of university development and has a strong focus on physical spaces.

**Question and Answer**

* Question: Regarding in-state vs out-of-state fees a student has had difficulty getting clear information on how to apply for residency for the purposes of tuition and if they would even be eligible. Additionally, this student was given advice to legally separate from their spouse to become eligible because their spouse is not an Ohio resident.
* Response: President Rogers will follow up on this issue more directly with the student. Also, BGSU will work to becoming clearer on the fees and related information for students earlier in the process.
* Question: Regarding the quality of physical spaces, a student in the sciences noted several cases where samples for course and research related activities have become contaminated including with mold.
* Response: President Rogers will coordinate with the deans and chairs to create a shorter-term solution to the issue. Additionally, the long-term solution will be addressed with the Master Plan.

**Officer Reports**

* **President: David M. Fisher**
  + The SEC has had two focuses this year, (1) to increase GSS’s organizational effectiveness to better handle the issues being currently addressed (in part, GSS has high turnover for membership) and (2) helping to make progress on the student financial issues.
  + To achieve our best work and get the best results we should seek to have a unified voice.
  + No Questions or Discussion
* **Vice President: Christopher W. Chandler**
  + Awards, Selection, and Judiciary Committee’s Sunday meeting is cancelled and will be rescheduled.
  + No Questions or Discussion

**Old Business**

* **MLK Day of Service Recap**
  + Over 150 letters were written and will be sent to nursing homes in Perrysburg.
  + Collective 72-person hours of service for this event
  + Another service event will be created for this semester by the Service and Engagement Committee
  + No questions or Discussion
* **Second Read through of Pay Schedule Resolution**
  + Tabled because the author is not present.
  + This will be reviewed in February.
  + Administration is aware of the resolution, but it has not been formally shared.

**New Business**

* **Graduate Student Survey Stats**
  + Presentation on the results of the survey, the survey itself will be shared.
  + Question: Regarding any measures taken to ensure validity based on participants and sampling.
  + Response: The survey was shared to more graduate students with the help of more people on campus including the deans. The total number of participants was around 300 and was more than double the response rate from last year.
* **Slack**
  + This Item was reordered.
  + SEC will be switching is communication platform to Slack for the spring semester.
  + There will be three channels (1) internal senator, (2) full GSS, and (3) internal SEC.
  + Please join the Slack channel to communicate and get information from SEC.
* **Shanklin**
  + Shanklin will be an all-day event on Monday April 1 from about 11am-9PM
  + Applications for the awards opened January 15 and there are two closing dates for the various awards February 24 and March 1.
  + There are many awards many of which are $1000 or more.
  + The International Student of the Year award has increased from $500 to $1000.
* **Vacant Positions**
  + Diversity and Belonging Representative
    - Motion: To approve the appointment of Zach Noesen to serve in the interim capacity for the remainder of the academic semester.
    - Rationale: Zach has already been selected to serve in the interim capacity for a few reasons. Zach serves as the Multicultural Graduate Student Success (MIGSS) graduate assistant. Zach has already worked with the person who was elected to serve in this position for the beginning of this academic year. The Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies Committee has been instructed to convert this elected position into an ex officio position held by the MIGSS graduate assistant starting in Fall of 2024 and it makes sense for this change to occur now to fill the vacancy.
    - Vote: Carried
    - Yes: 27
    - No: 0
    - Abstain: 1
  + Outreach and Marketing Representative
    - Motion: Allow for this position to remain vacant for the remainder of the academic semester. (Coupled with instruction for minimal, necessary modifications to Constitution and Bylaws to that end for later review)
    - Rationale:  The duties of this position have already been mostly fulfilled by other SEC members this academic year. The person elected to serve in this position for this academic year is not available to help transition a new person for this position.
    - Vote: Carried
    - Yes: 26
    - No: 2
    - Abstain: 0
  + Environmental Affairs Representative
    - Motion: Allow Nancy Ransom to serve in the interim capacity for the remainder of the academic semester. (Extension of the interim time limit and instruction for minimal, necessary modifications to Constitution and Bylaws to that end for later review)
    - Rationale: Kaylyn Flanigan is vacating this position after accepting a federal position with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Kaylyn has served with excellence. Kaylyn has recommended Nancy to fulfil this position and has offered to help orient Nancy to the position.
  + Moved by Biology to skip Q&A. Seconded by Media and Comm
  + Motion Carried by unanimous consent
  + Moved by Sociology to skip Discussion. Seconded by Biology
  + Motion Carried by unanimous consent
    - Vote: Carried
    - Yes: 28
    - No: 0
    - Abstain: 0
* **Graduate Student Labor Organizing Committee Open Letter**
  + Presentation by two members of the newly created organization
  + Consideration of an open letter to the Board of Trustees and the President
  + Question: What does GSLOC need from GSS
  + Response: Help to make connections with the right people on campus and help sharing information and getting information
  + Question: What are the next steps for GSLOC
  + Response: primarily more advocacy
  + Question: Regarding the information and statistics provided in the letter what some of the sources are that were used
  + Response: GSLOC would be interested in discussing further directly
  + Moved by Sociology to extend the time for Question and Answer by five minutes. Seconded by Biology.
  + Motion Carried by unanimous consent
  + Question: How to avoid a temple university situation.
  + Response: it isn’t always clear what the outcome of trying to unionize would bring. Unionizing isn’t the only option. Collective bargaining is not an option.
  + Question: Regarding the Town Hall presentation it looked like the data indicated that BGSU was better off than many of its comparative institutions.
  + Response: Based various contexts including living expenses, BGSU is not in a very good position comparatively.
  + Moved by Biology to extend discussion by five minutes. Seconded by Sociology.
  + Motion Carried by unanimous consent
  + Noted that there is reservation with the information contained in the open letter and the tone of the letter being too adversarial.
  + Moved by Biology to extend discussion by 10 minutes. Seconded by Sociology.
  + Motion Carried by unanimous consent
  + The stats seem more harmful to the goal than helpful
  + The letter has issues, but we want to help.
  + Motion: Endorse the open letter.
  + Moved by sociology to end discussion. Seconded by Teaching and Learning.
  + Motion Carried by unanimous consent
    - Vote: Rejected.
    - Yes: 13
    - No: 12
    - Abstain: 3
* **Building empathy through connecting with those who experienced struggles and suffering under occupation or apartheid regime through a storytelling event.**
  + Motion: To create a Panel Discussion Event and Story Telling Event.
  + Vote: Carried
  + Yes: 23
  + No: 1
  + Abstain: 4

**Announcements**

* Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.

**Adjournment**

* 5:04PM

Additional Notes

* President Rogers gives thanks to all the members of GSS for their service
* President Rogers apologized for pushing back the visit to the GA two times. Both due to meetings with Ohio senators and the Inter-University Association/Council of presidents
* Voting was completed at the end of the meeting