

Graduate Assistants United

Member Meeting

Monday, October 16st, 2017

USF-Tampa

5:00 pm

Present

Bryan Delius, Liz Kiebel, Carolyn Gubala, Brianna Cusanno, Karena Nguyen, Erin Sauer, Kathryn Dorn, Olivia Fleming, Samia Dutra, Jinyong Pang, Marcy Cockrell via Skype.

Agenda

Introduction

Approval of September meeting minutes

1. Motion to approve raised, seconded, approved.

Voting for new Secretary and Head Steward.

1. Kathryn for secretary, Colleen for head steward; both unopposed.
2. Motion to vote opened, seconded, approved. No comments/opposition.
3. Both Colleen and Kathryn elected without opposition.

Updates/chair reports

1. Faculty Forward/SEIU info-Erin
 - a. BOT walk out happened last Thursday morning. Awesome turn-out.

- b. PERC ruling went in the adjuncts favor! The hearing officer agreed that the adjuncts are public employees with collective bargaining rights, that they share a community of interest such that the unit is appropriate, and that they have a reasonable expectation of continued employment.
 - c. USF has 15 days to appeal. Haven't heard anything from them yet.
 - d. If there is no appeal, adjuncts employed from spring 2017 to the current semester can vote. USF "can't guarantee" neutrality during the election. Threats to reduce adjunct ranks significantly are not realistic, so as to maintain low faculty-student ratio. However, adjunct appointments are growing shorter, with phase-out of renewal-included contracts. (Adjuncts have no minimum salary, no minimum appointment, no consistency of work-to-pay ratio, very little regulation/guarantees, e.g., of living wages.)
 - e. Are adjuncts likely to vote for unionization? YES. ~70% approval in surveyed departments.
2. Communications (Karena):
- a. Karena, do you need anything from organizing? -Not really, not until beginning of November. Times and locations of events turned over during the meeting. Manager of the Independent hasn't replied to email asking about what \$5 to \$6 covers, but we can tell the bartender to just provide below-that-cost drinks.
 - b. Does the website need any updating? Can that be something we work on?
 - i. Yes, maybe updates; a few links don't work. Motion opened, seconded, sort-of-approved that JB will help with website update. Maybe look at UF website as an example.
 - ii. Also, we can remove highlighting from approved CBA. Erin will ask the university for a copy of the approved CBA, which they have not provided yet.
 - c. Can we make up a survey asking GAs about being moved to non-GA appointments (OPS adjuncting) while doing the same job (summer work, etc)?
 - i. Karena will make the survey.
 - ii. This is an unfair labor practice, against state law, so UFF can issue a cease-and-desist order. This undercuts GAU and removes union protections for people holding the same job as during the fall/spring semesters.
 - iii. TA-to-research-job switch may or may not be a legal problem, hence the need for an overall survey and action. (Note - some students may not interpret summer job-code-switching as a problem, so neutral tone for survey.)

- iv. (Came up later in the meeting, during the discussion of 7b.) We can email the university to get people added back into GAU after the summer job-code switches.
- 3. Secretary (Kathryn):
 - a. Overview of responsibilities:
 - i. Making meeting agendas, taking minutes, organizing exec meetings?, analysing/visualizing survey data, keeper of the cloud.
 - 1. Give her access to the cloud. **INVITATION SENT**
 - 2. For agendas – Kathryn will email people to ask for additions, figure out how to share the file. Exec meetings are the first week of the month, Kathryn will send out poll for scheduling.
- 4. Organizing (Liz and Bryan):
 - a. How are the two of you splitting duties?
 - i. Liz: socials, swag, UFF reports, also Mailchimp
 - ii. Bryan: member meetings, adding new members, updating email lists
 - b. Can we do some organizing of our organizers so things aren't missed?
 - i. @usfgau emails
 - 1. All (sometimes random) emails sent to GAU accounts go to co-presidents, but replies from GAU accounts don't automatically CC to co-presidents, or elsewhere.
 - 2. CC Erin and Marcy, and any relevant exec people, with replies, so that we don't send out duplicate replies.
- 5. Treasury (JB):
 - a. Tax exemption status update - JB not here, no updates.
 - b. Budget update - budget due in December.
- 6. Grievance (Adam):
 - a. TA letter from computer engineering - Erin sent back a new letter to Ruth with wording changes. Waiting to hear back.
 - i. Original letter was violation of contract; Dwayne, Ruth agreed that original letter was bad, but their redo wasn't much better.
 - b. Dwayne and Ruth are aware there might be some fishing for who told the grad school and assured us that everyone involved will be protected and that they never name any names.
 - c. (new item on agenda!) Grad council
 - i. Elected by faculty Senate, this council can add/eliminate programs/courses and set grad degree policies for USF as a whole.
 - ii. Three grad student nominations open.

- iii. Council has twice-monthly meetings, up to but maybe less than two hours, each student's vote equal to each faculty member's vote. Four hours of meetings per month.
- iv. Several people are interested in applying, will get emails.
- v. Seats have been unfilled for about a year. Meetings on 1st and 3rd Mondays, more info in email.

7. Stewardship (Colleen):

- a. How is the effort to find stewards going?
 - i. We have new stewards, including Brianna for communication.
 - ii. We probably don't have a new steward for Psychology, though. Maybe should have several.
- b. Any interdepartmental GAU-GSO social plans?
 - i. GAU can buy beer for socials! Less restrictions on purchases than apply to GSOs, generally.
 - ii. Karena wants a listserve of GSO contact info; send her info via email. Marcy asks Karena to compile info; Karena says she'll do that and put it in the cloud as an .xls.
- c. STEM stewards: where are they, how do we meet them?
 - i. Marcy says former students of hers have become GAs, may become St. Pete stewards for conservation bio; potential environmental science stewards?
 - ii. What about the nursing program?
 - 1. They have non-GA degrees, fewer GAs than usual, frequently change selection of degree tracks.
 - 2. Few PhDs, more DMVs maybe? PhDs = research. But the Institute of Medicine has "recommended" that nurses have doctorates soon; current PhD students are often working in hospitals, only really on campus three weeks per semester; however, those are not Gas.
 - 3. Student reps - not necessarily from the Doctoral Nursing Student Organization – suggested by Samia as alternatives to steward within nursing department.
 - iii. Maybe an event for Engineering?
- d. Karena will put together a description of why the union is helpful (what we've done - health care! Minimum salaries! Legal help including pay-issue grievances, other grievances...) As in, why people would pay dues. We can turn this into a \$3 Facebook ad!

New Business

8. Spencer at UF:

- a. Richard Spencer is speaking at UF this Thursday. Rick Scott has declared a state of emergency for the county. This allows the university to recoup some of the costs for security BUT it also relaxes a bunch of regulations that might make the event even more dangerous.
 - b. Is anyone going to the event? I have a UFF contact for you if you would like a leadership role or just want some friendly folks to chill with.**
9. Adjuncts survey - Liz sent around today. Please add your thoughts this week (track changes or start google doc) and send to Liz - due back to adjunct task force Oct 25th
10. UFF business
- a. Senate is this weekend! Anyone interested in carpooling or need a ride?
 - b. The agenda is out:
 - i. If you plan on attending a committee meeting get there and register before 10 AM. Committee meetings will be happening from 10-noon. (Government relations, membership, leadership and diversity)
 - ii. Budget workshop (JB): 2-3pm
 - iii. Marcy meeting with Eric Fiske and Bruce Nissen at 2:45
 - iv. If you don't plan on attending any special meetings, you'll need to get there and register before 3pm.
 - v. Senate starts at 3pm and will probably go until 5/5:30pm, dinner will follow until 7 pm, then bargaining council will immediately follow. Expect to be there until 9:30/10pm Saturday
 - vi. GAU chapters will meet at Cigar City Brewing after bargaining council Sat night (~9:30) → UF chapter confirmed attending
 - vii. Sunday senate is from 9-noon (check in before 9). Expect to be there the whole time.
 - c. Motions proposed from USF-GAU for bargaining council:
 - i. A clear and explicit statement that UFF stands behind, and will continue to stand behind, students, faculty, and staff at colleges and universities that have been legally protected under DACA. (Can include some language here from the motion at last Senate supporting our international community, including language about not giving out immigration status information)
 - ii. An explicit statement that UFF does not support groups, or events that include individuals or groups, that support, promote, encourage, or actively incite violence as a means of expression or protest. This includes implicit and explicit support, promotion, or encouragement of violence, or use of violence, either currently or as a historical precedent. Regardless of political, religious, or ideological views, no member of the university community should ever be made to feel that they are not safe on campus.
 - iii. Statement that USF-GAU/GAU bargaining council doesn't agree with the new proposed method for election of UFF President and VP: we also don't feel it's right to

vote (at Senate) to take away the voting ability of our members. Changing the system to just voting at Senate moves to an electoral college-like system, but without any input or say from our members first. No matter how "dysfunctional" the current process might be, our exec just doesn't feel comfortable with that.

- iv. Formation of a committee to look into reforming the voting system (building upon our previous conversation about Jennifer Proffit's suggestion for changes to the bylaws).
- v. Formation of a committee to look into forming GAU chapters at FIU, UCF, and FAU. These universities have UFF representation for faculty, but not GAs. The committee would investigate how to be effective at mobilizing a GA union at each university (maybe each university needs its own committee?).

11. Does GAU provide post-doc training? No.

12. Nursing School may not be providing free health care.

- a. We should try to post a permalink to the CBA on Facebook.