

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GENERAL STUDIES GENERAL STUDIES STUDENT COUNCIL

GSSC Minutes February 10, 2004

Members Present: Arash, Josh, Richie, Pavan, Matan, Marguerite, Abigail, Claudia, Chris, Rob, Won, Justin, Tinishia, Ariel, Scott, and Jimmy.

Abbey is absent.

A quorum is established.

Updates:

Justin (SGA Liaison) SNAGG contacted SGA and they should be approaching the GSSC soon. I still have four (4) free tickets for the ASA event.

Marguerite (Social Chair): There will be a billiards event on February 26th in the Game Room, there will be refreshments and alcohol. I am also in the process with the Formal Committee of planning an after party that is tentatively scheduled to be held at Eden.

Claudia (Alumni Affairs/Career Center Rep.): We had the Resumania last week and about 13 people showed up. Next Monday, February 16th, there will be a workshop for internships held at the Career Center Office from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Jimmy (SGB Liaison): SGB had an interesting meeting; they discussed the Bake Sale held by the Columbia College Conservative Club (CCCC). It is a contentious issue as some of the message boards had some racial epithets. SGB however maintains the position that they are the umbrella organization for political and religious groups and will not infringe on freedom of speech rights for groups under their purview.

Won (SEAS Liaison): ESC has some really nice t-shirts. We should perhaps consider redesigning our own shirts.

Pavan (Treasurer): I have an updated budget figure and we are presently at 9000 dollars and change.

Tinishia (CCSC Liaison): Mr. Kasdin came to speak to the CCSC regarding finance and administrative issues. He also stated that they recently hired Mr. Jim McShane, as head of security and that any concerns should be forwarded to him. The Columbia College COI has approved the Ethnic Studies major. There was also a protest earlier today where African American Students dressed in black, handed President Bollinger a letter regarding their concerns over race issues.

Scott (Student Services Rep): I attended a meeting where the printing quotas were discussed and found out some interesting statistics. Paper waste is down overall. The current plan is it to keep the quota at 100 pages a week for the time being. However they are also considering other options in the future such as a semester quota. Additionally, at the current time duplex printing is not set as the default. We feel that if this is advertised we can continue to reduce waste. We also discussed some issues with the UNI. When you graduate, the UNI is yours to keep forever, however we are in the process of deciding what services does that entail, i.e. email, space etc. There is also a new copier vendor on campus that will take over shortly and with that comes a reduction in price. The new price will be 10 cents per page, down from the current 15 cents per page. I am still in the process of how to go about getting more terminals in the GS Lounge. I spoke with the right person at the right time and will be discussing options soon.

Josh (Vice President External Affairs) - +Had a few inter0group meetings this past week and we discussed the current situation in the Deans Office of GS with regards to hiring another advisor. I have been told that should we decide to compose a letter the other Councils would endorse it as well as a show of support.

Abby (Academic Affairs Rep.): Next week we will be holding a roundtable discussion with Dean Awn to discuss academic issues and issues with the Core. There will be free pizza.

Agenda Item - Town Forum – Pavan

Pavan: Rob had mentioned at a previous meeting that at his school they had a town forum and this created a high attendance level. Instead of continually focusing on external relations, I would like to reinvigorate the relationship we have with our own student body. I thought one way of accomplishing this would be to host a weekly or bi-weekly meeting in the Lounge. We could make sure that we have completed our updates and allot time in the Agenda for a question and response period. We could also supply refreshments as means of attracting more people. I was curious as to what everybody thought about this.

Matan: Regarding updates, SGA has a good system where their council members write out their updates and send it in to be posted on their website.

Arash – I think that is a good idea and from now on we will send in the updates via email to Matan to be posted on the site. This should make the meetings more efficient.

Justin – Regarding using the GS Lounge, I know many students feel like they are being put out when an event is held. Is there some other venue where we could hold this? My second point is that we should go in conducting this on a trial basis. I do like the idea however as I feel we are distanced from our student body. SGA has a remarkable relationship with its student body, they consistently field comments and complaints with regards to wide variety of issues.

Steven: I agree with most of the points Justin brought up. I believe having one meeting a month would be ideal. Additionally I am concerned about the time we would have the meeting, as I wouldn't want to limit attendance by having the meeting at 7:30 p.m. as many students might have gone home for the day.

Scott: With regards to external relationships, the only way I felt I was able to make real improvements was working with the other councils. I would love to hear from our own student body. Would it be possible for us to do a virtual outreach via e-mail or e-community?

Tinishia: Email updates are good. I think student forums are good and that they should be held in the Lounge. I think one forum a month would be good, along with email updates.

Pavan: Are we going to want to impose rules, i.e. speaking limits?

Josh: I think some speaking limits would be ideal. As I am used to dealing with external issues, we may be surprised by some of the points that are brought up. Ideally we would want to maintain some control i.e. time limitations for responses at the meeting.

Justin: I have two questions. Would it be possible to just have public GSSC meetings where students would be encouraged to attend? Is there a suggestion box in the Lounge?

Arash: No there is no suggestion box in the Lounge.

Justin: I think students might get bored at town hall style meetings and then leave. We should clear the Agenda and have a public meeting to work through issues that students are concerned about.

Ariel: Personally I feel that town hall meetings are more important than these meetings. It is important for the community. I would like to see a bi-weekly discussion with some agenda items that invite comment.

Justin: A key to getting in touch with the student body would be better advertising.

Rob: We should send out a weekly email. It would benefit our community should we send out an email of this nature detailing our Agenda and stating that we would like to hear from the student body.

Tinishia: I agree with Rob, a weekly email highlighting our weekly events and giving the time and location of the town hall meeting.

Pavan: Thank you for your input, I have an idea of what we have a consensus on and I will be back with a proposal in about two weeks.

Agenda Item - Invite Letters – Claudia

Claudia: I have sent two invite letters via email I hope you have had a chance to check them over. One letter is for the keynote alumni who will be speaking, the other is for alumni who will be in attendance.

Pavan: I submitted my comments to you already. You do not need to put the letterhead on this, we have stationary, nice stationary that I will provide you with later.

Justin: I have some minor editorial points that I can go over with you later.

Agenda Item - Formal Committee – Marguerite.

Marguerite: I am working with a wonderful group of people on the Formal. I need help however with selling the tickets. Basically I need volunteers to sit in the Lounge at open time slots to sell tickets. We were not happy with the way the ticket sells went at Lerner last time and I am currently exploring online options. I am passing around a schedule, please put your names in when you could volunteer for a little while.

Final Comments:

Matan: Please submit to me your updates via email before next weeks meeting. Additionally I would like you each to submit some characteristics of your position as well as contacts you have made. I would like to create a guide that could be passed on to future councils to facilitate transition and create an institutional memory.

Meeting Adjourned.