

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GENERAL STUDIES GENERAL STUDIES STUDENT COUNCIL

March 9, 2004

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

All council members are present, a quorum is established.

Updates (via e-mail)

Arash Yomtobian (President) –

Josh Joseph (Vice President External) –

Richie Space (Vice President Internal) –

Pavan Surapaneni (Treasurer) –.

Matan Ariel (Senate) – *Caucus Update:*

- 1) Diversity council and Free Speech vs. Hate Speech: the caucus discussed how we should represent the issue in the Senate. We will try to investigate Diversity Offices in other institutions and make recommendations for Columbia. We will also try to bring short-term solutions until such an office is formed.
- 2) Graduate student unionization: we did not make a decision if to support the unionization process. We might just act as a formal way for the group to present its demands to the administration.

GS merchandise: I met with Jose Gonzales, and he will contact me with 2 vendors for t-shirts and sweat-shirts. Scott and I are looking into getting some nice GS merchandise available for sale for the GS student body.

Tuition Proposal: I am meeting with Dean Awn to better understand the GS fees structure, in order to improve the tuition proposal.

RFL: If any one on the council has trouble registering for the team, let me know. Also, please tell your friends that they can join the team, or create new ones!

Marguerite Daniels (Social Chair) – *Social Chair Update:*

There will be a Midterm Break THIS Wednesday, March 10th from Noon - 2 PM.

The Stressbusters will be giving massages, and we'll have tasty sandwiches, soup, salads and I'll try to make sure there will be good snacks.

GS Formal Update:

I'm sure you've all seen the GS Formal raffle email. We've had an amazing number of entries. Unfortunately a lot of people who didn't buy tickets entered too. Will have to send out a disappointing email tomorrow. We are also trying to get a classical guitarist to play during the cocktail hour, but the Columbia guitarists haven't responded (apparently they don't like money). If anyone knows of a classical guitarist please email me ASAP. If not, we are going to try the Julliard and Manhattan School.

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Oh - and last threat - to those of you on council that haven't purchased formal tickets, tisk, tisk!
A pox on your house. It's for charity!!! :)

Abigail (E.) Becker (Academic Affairs Representative) – no updates.

Claudia Barrera (Alumni Affairs & Career Center Representative) - last week's workshop: *Job or Graduate School, what are my alternatives?* was POORLY attended...
only 2 people showed up :o(

Ariel (K.) Beery (Committee on Instruction Representative) – Neither the comptroller nor the treasurer nor the Public Affairs office replied to my query regarding Columbia's failure to declare foreign investment, and I hope we will be able to move forward with only the name of the federal official questioned regarding Columbia's infringement.

Scott Olster (Student Services Representative) – Well, I recently started the communication process with Kevin Shollenberger of SDA. Dominic Stellini, Arash, and myself will be meeting with him sometime soon to discuss the future of GS's relationship with SDA (Student Development and Activities). More to come on this in the future, but I am so glad to get this started. I spoke with the President of ESC, Vijay Sundaram and my counterpart at ESC, Chris Cheng, and we are planning to have a series of joint council student services forums that will take place this semester, giving students the opportunity to express their issues to the councils and to administrators at Student Services. Also, Honey Fishman of Student Services is meeting with the Columbia Bookstore to discuss details concerning a website that would be able to sell student group apparel. This may be a good option for the GSSC. I have a Dining Advisory Committee meeting this Thursday. More to come on all of this!

Chris Danzig (Senior Class President) –

Rob Ward (Junior Class President) –

Stephen Davis (Sophomore Class President) – I have a *sophomore class pizza break* on Thursday. I have been coordinating with Marguerite and Tinishia to plan our *RFL* fundraiser. They can provide more details.

Abbey Dubin (First-Year Class President) –

Tinishia Bass (CCSC Liaison) –

Won Lee (ESC Liaison) -

Justin White (SGA Liaison) –

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Jimmy C. Chiu (SGB Liaison) –

Agenda Item – Harlem Wizards – Presented by Robert Wray III

Robert Wray III: Basically Harlem Wizard 4 council event. Like Globetrotters, played with 3 color ball. April Fools Day Gym secured, here for 2 hours, they play whoever we want to invite to play. Possibly like midnight mania. 3000 seat arena open to students from all 4 councils on a first come first serve basis. If you guys are motivated, all of GS can be brought into that stadium. There will also be some underprivileged youth from the area in attendance. No admission will be charged for the event and the Wizards themselves will help promote the event.

Arash: How much is it?

Robert Wray: \$900 would be the portion that the GSSC is accountable for. We have talked about other ideas, obviously if tee shirts that would be funded as well.

Chris: Are you asking us for our costs or estimated costs?

Rob: We are just asking for funding from Wizards themselves.

Josh: I would like to provide more information to clarify; the Wizards themselves are doing a fair amount to promote attendance. During Midnight Mania Coach Jones got out put out a hoop on College Walk with a one on one challenge with anyone who wanted to play, Wizards will be out there as well. They will probably be able to sell themselves.

Pavan: With the kids coming in are the homeland Wizards bringing there own?

Rob: The kids we are bringing in have to be cleared by Low as it is a PR event. Probably no more than 50-100 people in the area.

Agenda Item – Statement Regarding Undeclared Donations – Ariel

Arash: This is the last time we will consider this, so we are just going to take a vote.

5 in favor 3 opposed

6 abstentions Letter axed.

Motion Passes

Matan: Whether or not you agree with this statement. When you abstain you do not care in one way or another.

Marguerite: It is not that I oppose it. I oppose not feeling that I represent the statement.

Matan: If someone comes and states that these are the options taken. To abstain, I do not have an opinion on this either way.

Arash: I understand what Marguerite feels about this.

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Marguerite: I think we all feel out of touch with the student body, especially to promote a statement that touches on very important issues.

Justin: My objections to it are slight if we end this letter in light of acknowledged donation from a "Saudi donor" I do not think it would be proper to highlight one group. I think we should make it broader than this one thing.

Tinishia: I believe that we should take this statement to the other councils and let them consider it as well. I have such a bad taste in my mouth from Bollinger's letter last week.

Arash: I think we should stay focused on this, but it is a good idea to have other Councils review it.

Abbey: I think that this letter is presumptuous. I do not think that we need to be pre-emptive with a statement like this.

Pavan: I think in light of the conversation we should discuss this letter more. I motion to withdraw the earlier vote in support of the letter.

Motion to withdraw

9 in favor

3 opposed

2 abstentions.

First vote in support of the letter is null.

Arash: Would all be happy if we cut out the line regarding Saudi Arabia in the 3rd paragraph?

Pavan: Motion for Proposed changes

Scott seconds

12 in favor

1 opposed

1 abstention

Letter Passes

Agenda Item - Town Hall Meeting - Arash

Arash: How would you guys like to circle up the tables to promote a discussion?

Justin: I think that the Town Hall meetings should be open, we should encourage students to contact us and communicate with us. A question we should ask, "What questions do you have?"

Matan: Regarding structure, we should have an introduction part, where we tell a little about ourselves and the issues we have been pursuing this year. We should also ask "How can we make our meetings more accessible to you?"

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Chris: I guess I am relatively inexperienced is a Town Hall meeting a question and answer session or just a regular meeting?

Arash: A little of everything.

Pavan: We should also treat this as a forum to understand what our jobs should be from here.

Chris: Maybe we should talk about issues like expansion and discrimination.

Arash: I do not think expansion, plenty of meetings for them to go to. Maybe issues like housing would be salient.

Justin: I think Matan's suggestion cover it, our letter and policy statement.

Tinishia: I think for that this forum that we should definitely include how you feel as a GS Student.

Richie: Rather than solicit ideas I would rather have the students tell us how they feel.

Marguerite: What type of food should we have? I do not want to be too cheap.

Pavan: In support, we can't get too cheap however we have to be aware of budget constraints. I also think our printed updates should be made available. I just think it is a great idea, need to streamline our activities to the needs of the students.

Rob: On Tinishia's point, when people start talking about how they feel as GS students it is abstract. I think Richie's idea might be a good approach, people venting is not the goal.

Justin: I think we should direct this meeting in a certain way. I think it would be a good way to go, is to have a questionnaire, with a lot of different issues. I think continuing on Richie's point, it might be a good idea to have a fact sheet, pre-empt questions like on Alumni etc.

Chris: Any way we can solicit comments before the event. Call a number, shoot an email etc.

Scott: We can place an email address in the advertisements we send out.

Matan: My point is I strongly object to Richie's idea of mailing list. We might end up with none on the mailing list.

Arash: We are going to restructure how it is done. Make it weekly emails. Just once a week at end of Sunday into Monday.

Arash: What issues should we discuss?

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Pavan: Grading systems. Orientation, online course resources, ROTC,

Justin: Racism, recent protests, discrimination, Alumni

Matan: Social events.

Josh: CC sections.

Matan: Diplomas.

Pavan: Should we have a time limit on speakers?

All: Yes

Arash: We plan to start at 7:30 10 minute introduction stating who we are and what we are doing, and how long we think. Are people interested in helping?

Chris: Would this happen tomorrow or during the break?

Arash:

Matan: What we did last week regarding our statement on discrimination, Was that sent out to the administration and reporters?

Arash I sent it to the Spec and spoke with Dom about it.

Matin: To all members whenever you have the time please send out the duties of your position for the guide. Lastly, I do not know if you remember, last semester I wrote about lounge that GS did not have access to in Undergrad in 600 West 113st. Now they do.

Agenda Item – Discussion of Funding for Wizard’s Event

Richie: \$900 represents over 10% of our budget, additionally I have never heard of Harlem Wizards.

Josh: This is an impromptu thing; I think people were disorganized, especially the way event has been outlined. However with how well the men’s basketball team has been doing, in terms of winning and attendance, I think it is worth what we are paying into, if we take the effort to advertise this.

Justin: Rob Wray III has been involved with activities on campus for over three years. I have never seen CCSC approach us, I think that is something that is significant that he is. He is talking about opening everything up for GS. He is a young guy on CCSC, and I think it would be a nice thing for our students and everyone else is getting involved.

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Pavan: I am very torn, I feel both what you and Richie are saying, it seems like a lot of money, I feel we are not going to have a huge turnout., Even with 30 in attendance that is \$30 a head, but I feel it is important to dedication our time. I do not know if this is another avenue however we should consider offering less.

Scott : If advertised really well, I think with new trend of athletics many will attend. For Midnight Mania entire troves of Joint Program students came. I would say that we could have 75 from the Joint Program as long as advertised. The Harlem Wizards though not quite as known, are good and a lot of fun.

Pavan: I think that this is the time, when we decide Pizza events or if we want to opt for different types of events we have to make sacrifices. Right now we can't address this and that at the same time.

Chris: I have points, I know Bob, I deal with him on a daily basis, on that regards I would love to help him out. Second, this event is awfully expensive, only ½ through term, to give away this much. Midnight mania was genuine attempt to raise spirit, and that's what was and play Columbia. .

Josh: Event runs over two hours, first ½ Wizards do their thing; the second ½ hr is a game with wizards vs. seniors who are NCAA disqualified. Coach Jones will play as well as the 2nd game is faculty student's game. Since teams of 5 and subs within game and all out students and Harlem Wizards fame and they want us to nominate 4 from GS and send out email.

Chris: My last question, Do we have a set policy to justify an intermediary number if we cannot provide for the full amount requested?

Arash: Sort of similar to the CTV agreement. If we are all doing it then it should be 4 councils. No set hard and fast rule.

Josh: Besides what Scott stated, was that other councils did a very good job selling event, they got very involved with the event. We could get the Deans out on the court with Harlem Wizards, if that doesn't draw laughs I am not sure what would.

Matan: I think that is a great event that we should fund. We keep saying this is 10%, it is not total of beginning of year budget whatever is left for 8 weeks later. I believe that other Presidents have money that needs to be used. If we have events let us know that we need money. But this is a great event, I would love to go, it sounds more interesting than Midnight Mania. We should try to get involved in other tactics.

Marguerite: I am concerned about money for BBQ.

Arash: We can discuss that at the next meeting.

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Jimmy: Is \$8100 a definite number. I think it is a good event; a lot of GS'ers are fans if we are concerned about attendance why don't we actively promote it.

Arash: I am not being sexist, she said her council had a huge problem b/c they don't think there students will go, but they funded. I am upset about 10% of budget, they are asking for it and we have it now. Presidents have a lot of money that will be unused.

Justin: Moves to allocate \$900

Josh Seconds the motion

10 favor

1 abstain

1 against

Meeting Adjourned