

Graduate & Professional Student Council

General Assembly Agenda

March 20th, 2018 5:30

Koldus, Rm 144

I. Call to Order

Quote of the meeting:

‘The world isn’t run by the best and the brightest, it’s run by those who show up’
-unkown

II. Procedure and Governance

III. Approval of Minutes

IV. Speaker’s Podium

Transportation update – Madeline Dillard

- Things to focus on in Fall 2018- Rellis campus is coming up, have to look at different routes to service there without disturbing their current routes
- Blinn will be moving setting up august 2018- Blinn team and engineering academy will be out there
- Shift some bus routes around to provide new service
- Reallocating resources: Able to move stuff around- ridership is not affected
- Proposing to take off section of route 12 that services Lincoln- have something else planned for those areas
- Bringing back route 25
- Nights and weekends – combine route 12 and 25 from 7PM to 11:30PM one bus on weekend
- Combining routes 3 and route 5- 30 minutes round trip- saves more service hours
 - Time for current route 5- 35 minutes
 - Fixing the app- buses not showing up? Working on something that will have a lot more information/data to help you decide if you want to use the bus, where to be when and allow you to plan your trips better
 - Combining with Brazos transit- A&M ID or Blinn ID can ride Brazos transit buses for free

ISS- Bill Taylor Director of ISS

- Increase in cost of insurance for international and domestic students –
- Current cost of insurance- \$2,043- cost of insurance
- 2018-2019- \$2,496 – increasing because of how many claims that were made- still the cheapest bid, what requires student health services to have
- don’t know how increase will affect graduate student assistantships yet- will be getting that info to departments sometime in April or May
- not yet finalized, once it is, it will be added to our costs
- don’t know how this will affect stipends yet
- many international students are covered by their department

- Increase- 2015- 1,692, 2016- 1,894, 2017- 2,043
- 5,082 international students were enrolled last year (as of this January) grad students employees were waived- 2,005 that were on graduate student health plan
- A&M Kingsville and Commerce are all same price
- University of Texas 2,335- probably going up as well
- Benefits are staying the same

V. Pending Business

- a. Immigration Resources - <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1cu9hQ4MJ48IDCNq8KaYVG7M4JnBkn6vu>
- b. Immigration Presentation – Brenna Lin
 - i. Increasing H1B Visas Resolution
 - Matthew: We don't write law or policy- we write advocacy- advocating as a graduate student population of 40% of graduate students are international students – representing others in your department that are international students
 - Bill Taylor- F1 students have the right to speak- no federal regulations that say you can advocate for this participate in this etc.
 - o Legal standpoint what international students allowed to say?- different regulations that have been put into place for a long time- two types of visas, Immigrant (coming to stay permanently) and nonimmigrant (coming for a certain time period to do a thing). Non immigrant applicant- 3 minutes to apply for a visa, present I20, admission letter, will be interviewed by officer- are you a valid student, have supporting documents and do you intend to return back home? – That is a snapshot in time, not going in saying this is what your plan is for the rest of your life- Biggest area where visas are denied → someone has shown immigrant intent.
 - When you get to the US, department of state says if you come here and you want to apply for an F1 visa within 90 days, the department of state terms that to be fraudulent. After the 90 days, someone can apply for a change in status. H1B visa is a dual intent visa. F1 is nonimmigrant intent. H1B can be immigrant intent or not- either category
 - What happens when an F1 student graduates- Afterward can apply for H1B – goes into the lottery system- may receive it that will go and be processed and they may receive it. If they don't get it from the lottery, they have to apply next year. Non-STEM majors- get 1 year. STEM major can apply for an additional 24 months of training. Employer has to be an E verified company- can apply for additional 24 months of practical training. If it's a lottery every time period, people aren't guaranteed to get it. All companies are on the same field for the H1B's
 - These only apply to the private sector
 - If you look at what companies are saying, what people in industry are saying, they're saying “we need more slots available”
 - Changing the language to have a specific number to increase to?
 - difficult to work with specific language- ambiguity can actually be better

- Where would the number be coming from? It would be difficult for us to come up with a value

Resolution was passed

ii. Reforming H1B Visas Resolution

Resolution passed

iii. Increasing EB Visas Resolution

- Extraordinary Ability- require alien labor certification- not a simple process
- Worker will apply for one of the three levels and each one has different criteria to document that they really are some of the smartest people in their field- not an easy process
- Can take multiple years to apply depending on the level they're applying for
- Limit for EB123 etc, they are all capped in the 140,000 distributed each year.
- Not a lottery system, fully based merit system
- H1B is a dual intent visa- you can apply for US citizenship

Resolution was passed

VI. New Business

a. Student Health Services Fee Cap Increase Resolution- Resolution

- Fee cap that was set 20 years ago
- This request is to increase from \$75 to \$200- can only increase a certain percentage each year. This isn't a resolution to increase the fee, it's a resolution to increase the fee cap

Resolution was passed

b. Student Health Services Space Increase Resolution- Resolution for increasing space on campus for health services

- Asking for increased space on campus
- Can't build out because of fire restrictions and can't build up because the campus has restraints for height

Resolution was passed

c. Officer Applicant Questions – only have one applicant

- Time commitment- Each role has different responsibilities throughout the year

VII. Voice Reports

a. Committees

b. Department, Program, or Organization Announcements

Physics and Engineering Festival, Saturday April 7th, Mitchell buildings

To volunteer, find more info at <http://physicsfestival.tamu.edu/>

GSO Research Symposium April 20th, Health Professions Education Building

Register at https://tamuhsc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1LCgJOfuYnF7CZ by March

30th at 5pm, direct questions to COM-GSO@tamuhsc.edu
Neuroscience symposium- April 6th from 10-5 in ILSB- deadline is this Friday for abstracts- website?
Vet school is having their open house this weekend, family welcome

VIII. Standing Committee Reports

a. Awards

b. External Legislative Affairs

Texas State Employees Union - <https://cwa-tseu.org/about-tseu/join-tseu/>

-11,000 members throughout the entire state of Texas- spread out among every university – work on things to increase stipends, lower student fees (~\$1,500/month) can join from between \$11-\$16 – no benefits from joining. Don't have the ability to collectively bargain, you can check out the website if you want to have a look

c. Internal Legislative Affairs

Handicap Placard Abuse update

- Need restrictions on students who park in handicap marker that are physically fit. Pushing this forward with support from other organizations. Accepted – email out that students cannot park in those spots- ~40-50 people from one single game
- Does the university has the correct number of handicap spots to balance what the population needs?
- UPD is now enforcing this issue

Trying to see if we can raise the amount of assistantships we can get. Comparing cost of living and comparing other universities and their stipends

d. Marketing and Communications

e. Recruitment

f. Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity dinner March 22nd- postponed

g. Programming

Community of Scholars April 10-12 (dinner on 10th), RSVP at tx.ag/COS2018

- Sign up!

Event at Hopdoddy tonight after the GA

h. Quality of Life

i. Research

Elevator Pitch Project

j. International Student Affairs

X. Special Committee Reports

a. Student Research Week

b. Grad Camp

XI. Officer Reports

a. Vice President of University Affairs

b. Vice President of Information

c. Vice President of Finance

d. Executive Vice President

i. GPSC Officer Applications

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5WOKHIyRmNvdjk1TE56cnV5Y3c/view>

Apply on the GPSC Website, Governance and Membership > Election Information > Officer Application

ii. Elections

e. President

i. Growth Report

ii. GPSC Election- requirements- president meets with Stefanie Baker, other positions can meet as well. President applicants need to have approval by their advisor. In addition to the online application, have to give a short presentation in front of the GA.

iii. Rest of Year Timeline- 4 meetings left (3 after this meeting)

iv. G.R.A.D. Aggies Advanced Certification Update- 61 names to Dr. Bright- if you've done your basic and intermediate certificate, this allows you to get the advanced certificate

XII. Advisor Comments

XIII. Administrative Comments

XIV. Announcements

Meet with your Internal Committees

XV. Adjournment

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Advocacy | Community Building | Research