

Doctoral Students' Council
Unofficial Minutes
September 10, 2004

Chair: Stephanie Domenici-Carbonargi

Notes: Camille Tipton

Meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm

- I. Approval of Agenda
The agenda was approved unanimously.

- II. Approval of Minutes from May Plenary
Minutes were approved.

- III. Invited Speakers

- A. Rolf Meyersohn (GC Ombudsperson)

- Mr. Meyersohn described the functions of the Ombudsperson office explaining that his office offers a “safe and neutral place” for students to discuss potential legal matters. He explained that the Ombudsman Office aims at helping students come up with solutions to various problems that might arise during their academic career at the GC. Furthermore, many students that actually need his services don’t know it’s there to serve the students, staff and faculty of the Graduate School and University Center. He emphasized that there are no records kept in his office and that everything is confidential.

- B. Agnes Abraham (Pres. University Student Senate)

- A. Abraham introduced herself to the plenary explaining that she is a student at Medgar Evers College and was recently elected to the University Student Senate. The University Student Senate was founded in 1972 for inter-governmental relations and is very active in accomplishing various goals jointly with the DSC. She likened the USS to the federal government whereas the DSC is similar to the state government.

- She wants members of the DSC that there are student scholarships available such as the USS Merit Scholarship. Our DSC representative for the USS should act as a liason between the USS and the DSC.

- The USS is also very concerned about the technology fee and how it is being implemented. A. Abrahams suggested that it be monitored more closely to make sure that the monies are used in conjunction with the student body’s wishes.

The USS is open from 9am – 5pm, telephone no. 646-344-7280, website: www.uss.cuny.edu.

IV. Old Business

- A. Constitutional Convention (Camille Tipton, Paul McBreen) – revised bylaws, proposed constitutional changes, & changes to Adjunct Project Coordinator.
- B. Tipton reviewed the various changes made to the DSC Constitution during the last year including amendments to 3 bylaws, introduction of a new bylaw, resurrection of a missing bylaw. A number of revisions to the Constitution itself were approved by the plenary last year but not by the student body. These changes, as well as any introduced this year, will need to be voted on by the DSO.

For the benefit of new representatives, C. Tipton explained the two different methods for changing bylaws and the constitution. First, the bylaws can be changed by introducing proposed changes to the plenary, opening it up to discussion and at a subsequent plenary, a vote is taken. If the majority of the plenary approves, the bylaw is amended or approved.

The Constitution is a more detailed matter. Amendments to the Constitution must be introduced to the plenary, discussed, and voted on in a subsequent plenary. However, in addition to being approved by the plenary, constitutional changes must be approved by a majority vote of the student body(DSO).

Following this overview of the Constitutional Convention, P. McBreen explained that Bylaw #7 had vague language regarding the Adjunct Project and needed to be revised. Changes that he proposed included the removal of 2 coordinators and replaced with “person or persons”; in section 7.2 hiring procedures were changed to give the hiring power over to the DSC, with the hiring team consisting of the DSC Co-Chairs and Steering Committee. Additional changes included allowing the removal of the Adjunct Project Coordinator(s) by a majority of the Steering Committee instead of the Plenary and more flexibility was introduced on the pay scale.

C. Approval of 2004-2005 Provisionary Budget (Aleta Styers)

A. Styers explained that a provisional budget needs to be voted on today. Additionally, many items involving the budget have changed including the way we receive funds and that our reserve fund had dramatically decreased. Additionally, the DSC is only receiving funds based on the

number of students who have actually paid their fees, unlike in the past where we received funds based on the total number of students enrolled. The budget is extremely tight this year and due to so many procedural changes it might be necessary to make changes to the budget in December. She further explained that there is perhaps only about \$1,000 in the budget that can be adjusted.

A motion to accept the provisional budget was unanimously accepted.

D. Information Resources Issues (Paul McBreen)

J. Haggard informed P. McBreen that he is resigning his position in IR by the end of October.

There has been a big push for a dedicated server for student web pages. These web pages would be used for professional or student purposes. Recently a full-time person was hired to support and maintain student web pages but no official date was given as to when students would be able to access this service.

Finally, P. McBreen reminded the DSC that IR maintains a series of computer training workshops free to all students. However, because the classes are often under-enrolled they are often cancelled. A group of about 10 students is necessary to help disseminate information regarding this service.

E. What's new with the DSC Website (Camille Tipton)

C. Tipton gave a visual tour of the DSC website as well as the Advocate, the student-run newspaper of the GC. Students were encouraged to visit the web site regularly to access information stored there including department check request forms, minutes, DSC services etc.

V. New Business

A. Orientation for Reps (Stephanie Domenici, Paul McBreen)

S. Domenici and P. McBreen welcomed the new DSC representatives and explained various duties of their jobs including keeping students in their department informed about activities, opportunities, and upcoming events of the DSC.

B. Health Services Committee (Celia Braxton, David Golland, Eric Doviak)

Motion to form a standing committee on health care issues was unanimously approved and will be chaired by C. Braxton. This committee is comprised of 2 sub committees, chaired individually by D. Golland and E. Doviak.

C. Braxton explained that much pressure has been put on the DSC to provide monies to fund health care for the graduate students. The Health Services Committee will investigate the issues further and make reports and recommendations as needed throughout the semester.

C. University Student Senate Delegate and Election of Alternate Delegate (David Golland)

D. Golland attended the August USS retreat and met other delegates from other campuses. He announced that he would be make regular reports regarding the USS to the plenary and the steering committee to strengthen communication between the two organizations. He is currently running for vice-chair for graduate affairs, part of the steering committee for the USS.

C. Braxton was nominated and seconded for USS alternate and elected by acclamation as USS alternate.

Alternates are allowed to be on the steering committee, can run for positions, can attend retreats, and generally be as active as the alternate wishes. However, if the full representative (D. Golland) is present, the alternate will not be allowed to vote. The alternate can only vote if the delegate is unable to attend.

VI. Announcements

A. “Coming Alive” Fall Party, October 1st (Tomo, Eric)

We need volunteers! Tomo explained the theme of the party and Eric asked for volunteers for set-up and take-down of the party.

B. (Periodic Review Report) in need of Student Feedback (Stephanie Domenici)

Stephanie asked for input on the various challenges of being a CUNY graduate student including positive and negative aspects.

C. Student Space at City College (Paul McBreen)

P. McBreen said that were complaints from City College that there wasn't space at city college for graduate students.

D. Baruch's Gym (Stephanie Domenici)

S. Domenici explained that since we moved into this building we were promised a space for a fitness center and now the GC has been offered a deal allowing matriculated GC students to use the Arc Center, a state-of-

the-art gym at Baruch. The cost for students will be \$100 per year but clarification needs to be made if this is for the academic year or the calendar year.

E. Political Science summary

A Political Science student reported departmental concerns to the plenary including health insurance, technology and supplies, fitness center with weights, tuition remission for graduate fellows and an in-house ATM.

F. Sociology summary

Students in sociology reported concerns with the scaffolding, the desire for a “free speech space”, better use of the smoking space outside the GC, and cheaper foods at the GC.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15pm