RACKHAM STUDENT GOVERNMENT
BOARD MEETING
10/11/12
RACKHAM GRADUATE BUILDING
2ND FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM, NORTH ALCOVE
6:36 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER: 6:36pm
   a. Present: Kaitlin Flynn, Michael Benson, Eli Benchell Eisman, Alex Gutierrez, Brandon Erickson, Heidi Alvey, Pete McGrath
   b. Absent:
   c. Excused: Alex Toulouse, Alex Emly, Dan Trubman, Anna Belak

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
   a. 

III. APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES
   a. Minutes from 10/4/12—No quorum

IV. OFFICER REPORTS
   a. President Michael Benson. Financially we have just under $22,000 in the bank given our first installment of the Fall semester. Half of the board is out sick, sadly. Over 100 people have applied to sit on the various committees for appointments, including 6 people who have applied to serve on our board. The Michigan Daily has signed on to co-sponsor the election forum on November 1. The format has also changed, there will be a debate as well as providing information. Proponents and opponents will be speaking in the Rackham Auditorium on November 1 as well as candidates for local, state and federal office and their designees available to speak afterwards.
   b. Vice President Kaitlin Flynn. Newsletter going out this week, committee chairs or anyone let me know if there are any updates to include. Also, tonight is the second of our co-sponsored events with the DPC for the VP debate watching.
   c. Treasurer Alex Toulouse. Out sick.

V. Guest Speaker/Discussion: Laura Patterson—Chief Information Officer & Associate Vice President
   a. Accessibility of Technology update: Laura starts by discussing the Google Accessibility issue. Background: a few years ago the U initiated a large program called Next Gen Michigan to bring Michigan up to date with technology and IT for teaching and administration. The goal was to consolidate IT services and build a shared infrastructure to make these issues more efficient and supportive. The first step was to work with various individuals across campus to choose a collaborative platform, which drove everyone to the selection to Google and Box.
Migration started last spring. Now what has come forward is the serious issue of accessibility. The National Association for the Blind had come forward and pursued justice to Google in the past (via a Northwestern lawsuit). Google responded by promising to make their services accessible to all people. Based on that statement, the UM team made the decision to move forward. A few weeks ago Google released an announcement giving all the things that they have worked on to make the services more accessible. The UM team then tested the changes and determined that the improvements were not sufficient to address the concerns of students on campus. Laura draws a diagram of the old and new systems. Basically, students with disabilities could put Assisted Technologies programs to put in front of the old Blue Mail to allow them to access their mail. Under the new Google system, students with disabilities can use AT with the interfaces for Gmail as Outlook or MacMail. The problems are: first, Google’s approach to making Chrome accessible, they implemented a long term strategy to create a new AT called Chrome Vox to work in a cloud environment/web interface. Google responded to Michigan’s claims that the services were not improved and offered to continue to improve. Google also claims that Chrome Vox is actually an easier technology to learn, but students shouldn’t be forced to make the change. Secondly, in the Google system, it is not just mail, but calendar, docs/drive, sites, contacts, chat, etc. So all of these services need to be made accessible too. Currently, if students are using AT with either Outlook or MacMail, mail and calendar are accessible. But what is the biggest priority for UM? Docs/Drive? Or webmail? Laura asks for our input and suggestions here. Laura also clarifies that there is offering to set up AT and

b. Discussion from the board: Heidi asks if Laura has met with GEO’s disability caucus. Laura says yes and she has also met with the Graduate Student Disability Committee. Heidi suggests putting this specific question in front of those committees for more input as the GEO caucus has a great working relationship with students with disabilities. Heidi asks regarding 6 months timeframe and mentions that it is longer than a semester and might be hard for students with disabilities that will go an entire semester without accommodations. Michael offers to send out an anonymous webform to all graduate students. Lauren seconds the survey as a good idea. Eli mentioned that he found the ITS documents during Google migration to be very helpful. Eli mentions too that the documents are the most collaborative form between teachers and students and that might be the highest priority. Laura asks about chat and if that would be an issue for faculty members who could only hold office hours via chat. Michael mentions that there would need to be a policy made to prevent faculty from holding office hours. Kaitlin asks about the GoogleDocs requirement. In a meeting with Laura, Phil Hanlon said that he would send out an email to faculty saying that they could not require students to use GoogleDocs until the accessibility issue was fixed. Kyle mentions that Docs projects are collaborative, but Mail and Calendar are intensely personal and if that is hindering students, Mail should be the top priority. Michael asks if there is anything the EECS students could do to assist in this venture. Also, given the timeline update, ITS will leave BlueMail up for a little longer for
students to access their mail until they figure out what priorities to ask Google to pursue.

c. **Other issues:** Michael asks about reducing printing costs such that the number of impressions could be impressed and asks for an update. Laura says that she really doesn’t have an update—the office has been directing efforts elsewhere. Eli brings up the suggestion of having a computer lab or a printer in Rackham. Laura is very receptive. Michael also mentions about having a CAEN image to make it available on all University machines. Michael asks about interfacing our GPA scale change with IT services. Laura explains the complexity. Eli asks about specific software for departments and making it accessible to all University departments. Laura says that there is a project to look at software licensing and is aimed at increasing accessibility and decreasing costs. Michael asks about accessibility to journal articles over MWireless on North Campus. This is a North Campus specific issue—Kyle talks on issues he’s had logging into his servers as well. Laura mentions that they are addressing this by putting up MWireless all over campus. Pete asks about the clunkiness of CTools and how some students in his department have issues. Laura welcomes emails: *lmpatter@umich.edu* of any concerns and questions.

VI. **Open Discussion—** Eli mentions that the bar night for H4H will be postponed. Pete also hosted a great event with Focus HOPE last week. Michael suggests a resolution to prohibit faculty/instructors from mandating the use of Google Docs. Heidi offers to draft this resolution. Pete asks about changing the meeting time slightly. Pete offers to work on the RSG logo.

VII. **Adjournment—** adjourned.