I. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Rackham Student Government General Board Meeting was held on
Wednesday, February 16, 2011, at 7:15 p.m. at the Rackham Graduate Building.

RSG President Michael Benson called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.

Members Present: Michael Benson, Mayela Montenegro, Mindy Waite, Ethan Eagle, Eli Eisman,
Bob Nyambati, James Mulligan, Kristy Figel, Yu Zhang, Alex Emly, Josh Bow,
Tien-Huei Hsu, Lily Mancour, Katherine Fisher, Cherisse Loucks

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MEETING MINUTES

Ethan motions to add his proposed GSRA Resolution to the meeting agenda. Mayela seconded the
motion.

AYES: 15
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
Motion passed. Amendment to the meeting agenda is approved.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes for January 26, 2011.

AYES: 15
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
Motion passed. Meeting minutes are accepted.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes for February 9, 2011.

AYES: 15
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
Motion passed. Meeting minutes are accepted.

III. OFFICER REPORTS

a) PRESIDENT

MICHAEL:
RSG Representative Chen Li has been removed from the RSG Board due to failure of meeting
attendance requirements. The Communications Committee is requested to draft something to send
to the student body. The Board can appoint someone for the vacant Division II seat.

The following RSG members’ term expires in May: Michael Benson, Mayela Montenegro,
Ethan Eagle, Phil Esposito, Krishnaaditya Pappu, Raj Thapar, Yu Zhang, Katherine Fisher, and Chen
Li (who has been removed). RSG Elections for the Winter term will take place March 22nd and 23rd.
b) VICE PRESIDENT

MAYELA:
None.

c) TREASURER

MINDY:
Will be introducing a student organization who will be coming tonight to make a presentation on their funding request.

IV. FUNDING PRESENTATION: STUDENTS ENGAGED IN GLOBAL HEALTH

MINDY:
The student organization, Students Engaged in Global Health, will be presenting their funding request. The Budget Committee has already looked at their proposal. They want to provide opportunities to UM students to get experience with international projects. Their proposal: one-week project in Jamaica with 5 volunteers, partnering with the Blue Mountain Project to serve the Jamaican community. Details in agenda packet. Asking for $5,000 for lodging, transportation, office supplies, health insurance.

MAYELA:
Just to reiterate, all student organizations requesting over $700 are required to make a presentation to the RSG Board for funding approval.

MICHAEL:
Encourage RSG Representatives to look at the student organization's other sources of funding, what they're requesting, the benefit that their event will have to the entire graduate student body. Look at how they'll advertise their event. Take a second and look over their request while we wait for the group to come in.

ENTER student representatives of the Students Engaged in Global Health:
Saurabh Vyctor – saurabhv@umich (guy)
Vida Henderson – vahender@umich (girl)

MICHAEL:
We'll do introductions. Then our guests will present and there'll be a 5-minute Q&A. Mindy will chair since she's Chair of Budget Committee.

RSG Representatives introduced themselves.

MINDY:
Introduced the Students Engaged in Global Health.

VIDA:
This is the only student organization in the School of Public Health to work with human rights and public health. Since 2007, it has conducted service trips. Has gone to China and will now
be going to Jamaica. Is cross-registered with the School of Public Policy. Has representation of graduate and undergraduate students.

SAURABH:
Will work with the Blue Mountain Project – an organization in Jamaica that was started in 2004 to provide different services to the local community such as drinking water, increase literacy, economic development, and development of health clinics. 5 graduate students will be going – 3 in public health, 2 in epidemiology, and 1 undergraduate student. Have been asked to give public health education about clean drinking water. This year, organization will focus on solar disinfection – was asked to talk about this and different methods of clean drinking water and hygiene for the community. Currently there is 1 health clinic in the Jamaican area where the group will be going, serviced by 1 nurse and 1 administrative staff person. Health clinic has 50 patients, so there’s a need for volunteers. Team that went last year worked a lot in the health clinic, helped manage medical records, and some members of the team worked with the literacy program with the local school. Organization has been asked to deliver health education to womens’ groups, churches, etc.

MICHAEL: Question – cross-listed with public policy, is there course credit?
SAURABH: No, because this is the first year it’s cross-listed. It’s still being developed.

MICHAEL: A total of 6 students will be going?
VIDA: No, 4 students going – 3 from public health, 1 undergraduate.

MICHAEL: How have you advertised for the organization and the trip?
SAURABH: A team from the organization was formed to select the participants. Application was advertised to several graduate schools.

MICHAEL: Were email distributed via listserves?
SAURABH: Emails were sent to Rackham listserves, law, business, public policy, SNRE, pharmacy, med school, public health.

MAYELA: Why are 3 of the 4 participants from public health?
SAURABH: This year, there was a lack of applications from other departments like public policy. Got some applications from pharmacy and economics students.

JOSH: Where did money come from in the past years?
SAURABH: The School of Public Health and School of Public Policy have provided funding, and the organization has organized fundraising efforts.

JOSH: Have you applied to these sources again for funding?
SAURABH: Has applied for these grants. Unfortunately, haven’t heard back from some of them. Still waiting from MSA and the School of Public Policy.

JAMES: Will you be giving a presentation after the trip?
SAURABH: Will have an event to give a presentation after the trip. Will collaborate with another organization. Will have a panel of 10 or so to share experiences.

JAMES: What has been the attendance in the past for these post-trip presentations?
SAURABH: About 15 or so people have attended in the past.
KRISTY: Will there be any long-term sustainability of the projects?
VIDA: Hopes to go every year to maintain the relationship. Hopes it will be a sustainable project.

JOSH: If there’s no funding from RSG, will you still be going?
SAURABH: Will do anything possible to go, including putting personal resources to fund the project. Part of the money will be going to host families who will take care of the team members. Has made financial commitments to various people, so trip will take place.

MICHAEL: The request for $2,100 for transportation, is this for airfare? What's the cost per person?
SAURABH: About $480/person for airfare. Host family taking care of the team members will cost about $59/person/night. Transportation also includes to/from the airport.

JOSH: How many days is the trip?
SAURABH: 6 nights.

MICHAEL: Have you heard from MSA?
VIDA: Applied for cycle 1. Have not heard back from them.

MICHAEL: Thanks, you will get our decision through Mindy.

GUESTS LEFT.

MICHAEL:
Rackham consists of all PhD students and some Masters. Vida is a non-Rackham student since Public Health PhD students are not part of Rackham. Keep this in mind during the deliberations.

MINDY:
The Budget Committee’s recommendation: under assumption there were 5 graduate students going, the Committee decided on $0 funding because it's an expensive trip and only 5 are going. We can encourage to fund their presentation afterwards.

James moved to proceed with the Committee’s recommendation of $0 funding without prejudice and encourage them to apply for funding for the post-trip presentation event. Alex E. seconded the motion.
AYES: 13
NOES: 1
ABSTAIN: 1
Motion approved. The Students Engaged in Global Health will receive $0 funding, but will be encouraged to apply for funding for the post-trip presentation event.

V. ETHAN’S PROPOSED GSRA RESOLUTION

ETHAN:
Downloaded document that excludes GSRA from collective bargaining. Pertinent labor relations board decisions in which GSRA were included in the union. NYU lost case against grad students trying to unionize. If anyone is interested in these cases, ask him. Will try to email documents to the Board. It’s in contradiction to the policy in med schools who after receiving their
doctorates, are eligible to unionize because they perform duties to hospitals that are economic. GSRAs are doing things that promote one’s education more so than university’s economic status.

MICHAEL:
There’s also a ruling from the 1970s on separating GSRAs.

MINDY: Where does Michigan stand?
ETHAN: We fall in alignment – you’re a student first, employee second.

TIEN: What was the NYU ruling?
ETHAN: Only unionized social science GSRAs. Union petitioned for a reexamination because after 2004 GAs were thrown out. It’s still ongoing.

MICHAEL:
Thanks to Ethan for putting forward the first resolution of the term. A template will be sent to the RSG Board if you want to create your own resolution on an issue.

One mistake to fix in the resolution – line 19, per our bylaws the transition from “whereas” to “operative” clause fix – strike “resolve that”. We have 2 forms of resolutions – sense of the board (our thoughts/opinion), and statement of policy (gets forwarded to Dean, Provost, or President with whom we have arrangements. If they sign up to a board resolution, it becomes a policy.

This proposed resolution is a “sense of the board”, us saying this is our feeling and what we think. If we were drafting the 2nd type, we would have a public hearing and invite the student body.

Ethan moved to adopt the resolution.

JOSH:
Some of the verbage gives feeling of bias when it’s our role to remain neutral.

Propose amendments:
Line 5 – “whereas it’s sense of board that GSRAs are not employees of the university.”

Doesn’t want to include “questionable behavior” because it’s not relevant to resolution. Doesn’t think we can say ‘gesture of good will...” as a “whereas” clause because we have no authority over GEO, and it’s more of a resolution if we want to do that. Line 15 – if we want to encourage GEO to do it, it would be as a resolution and not whereas clause. Instead of (line 22) “pertinent fact” – we should put relevant laws to include historical context.

Josh motioned the following amendments to the resolution:
Amend lines 5 and 6 – “sense of the board that most grad students are not aware of legal implications of the ‘employee’ of the University”

Michael suggests that Committee look over it. Mayela suggests that Josh and Ethan work together for a revised resolution.

Ethan proposed modifications to the proposed amendments:
Title: no comma
Lines 5/6 – “whereas the definition of ‘employee’ of the University of Michigan is a legal one and not understood by many GSRAs”
Lines 10/11 – struck
Strike 2nd footnote
Line 16 – moves up after concerns, “therefore”
Line 22 – strike “pertinent facts of MERC 1981” and replace with “relevant law and court decisions”
Line 24 – change to “website”

Cherisse suggests that citation is fixed to take out Wikipedia as a source and replace with the real source.

Mindy motioned to grant Mayela and Ethan editorial authority over resolution. Josh seconded the motion.
AYES: 15
NOES: 0
Motion approved.

Michael motioned that that line 27 instead of “be it further,” to be “finally.” Josh seconded the motion.
Approved – no objections.

Mindy moved to call to question. Ethan seconded it.

Mayela motioned to approve the resolution. Ethan seconded the motion.
AYES: 12
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 1
Motion passed. The proposed resolution: “A Sense of the Board to Inform Graduate Students of Past Precedent and to Empower their Rights During the Ongoing Unionization Efforts” has been approved with amendments. Michael stated he would not veto it.

MICHAEL:
Thanks again to Ethan for proposing the resolution. As a note, should we ever want to take a position on this specific issue, we’ll have to vote on another resolution to revoke this one.

VI. GSRA SURVEY DATA

MICHAEL:
Thanks to Eli for getting the survey data from Marie. Will be emailed out to everyone and will be placed on new website.

VII. TOWN HALL UPDATE

JOSH:
We have a tentative date for Division I. Had a meeting with Rackham’s Associate Dean Peggy McCracken to set up date for Divisions III and IV. Has a meeting next week for Division II. Dean McCracken would come to a RSG Board meeting to talk to us about a separate issue.

MICHAEL:
Dean McCracken wants input on Rackham’s centennial. Thanks to Josh and the Academic Affairs Committee for the hard work!

VIII. SOCIAL GATHERING UPDATE:
KRISTY:
Tomorrow, 9pm-11pm. Will send out an email.

MAYELA:
Please take a dish or something to share, potluck-style.

IX. NEW WEBSITE

MICHAEL:
The new website is still at rsg.umich.edu. Use your umich uniqname and password to log in. If you see an error message, refresh the page. You'll be granted a certain authority to edit the page. Please regularly update your page(s). Please share RSG's twitter account and follow RSG. If you have a Twitter account to link to the site, please do that. Also, list upcoming events on RSG's calendar for next week. Board meetings and events we fund will be added to the calendar.

X. COMMITTEE REPORT

a) ACADEMIC
Josh moved to accept the meeting minutes of the Academic Affairs Committee. Ethan seconded the motion.
AYES: 15
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
Motion passed. Meeting minutes accepted.

MICHAEL:
The meeting minutes will be posted to the RSG website.

b) BUDGET
Mindy move to accept the meeting minutes of the Budget Committee. Mayela seconded the motion.
AYES: 15
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
Motion passed. Meeting minutes accepted.

c) COMMUNICATION

MAYELA:
Newsletter will be emailed out at the end of this week. Please email me anything you want included on the newsletter.

d) ELECTIONS

MINDY:
The Committee will be interviewing Elections Director candidates next Tuesday.
e) LEGISLATIVE

MICHAEL:
SAGE conference call will take place this Sunday. If you want to be on list, let him know to be added. Legislative Committee tonight is cancelled. Has made contact with State Senator to come in on March.

f) STUDENT LIFE:

MICHAEL:
Some expenses from last semester were carried over for this semester, so we’ll have to revise budget. Mindy will send out an email. Thanks to Mayela, Rahul, and Alex E. for attending the Valentine’s Day event last night.

RAHUL:
Held a Student Life Committee meeting last week at Grizzly Peak. The meeting minutes will be provided for the next RSG meeting.

The Valentine’s Day event last night was successful and a lot of fun. Pinball Pete’s event will be next week or the week after Spring Break.

MICHAEL:
Confirmed Blue Leprechaun for one of the 2 monthly bar nights, but still in negotiations for additional discounts. Will work to negotiate to see if appetizers can be funded.

g) I ALREADY GRADUATED DAY (IAGD):

CHERISSE:
Completely at a loss of when to have this event. Need to figure out when bands are available.

MICHAEL:
Please coordinate with Student Life Committee. Use IAGD email listserve.

XI. INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS:

MINDY:
Wants one more person to join her and Tien-Huei to go to GEO office tomorrow, 5pm to discuss information on GEO. If anyone wants to email her questions to ask GEO, email Mindy.

MICHAEL:
Emails have been set up for rsg-vicepresident@umich.edu and rsg-treasurer@umich.edu to help facilitate between transitions.

XII: OFFICE HOURS

MICHAEL:
Thanks to all who have emailed office hours and individual projects updates.

XIII: OPEN DISCUSSION
ETHAN:
GEO has information on its website to go to departments and give a session. Ethan extended an invitation to have them go to Aerospace Department.

XIV: ADJOURN

The Rackham Student Government General Board Meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by: Mayela Montenegro, Vice President