RACKHAM STUDENT GOVERNMENT
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
2/20/2013
RACKHAM GRADUATE BUILDING
2ND FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM, NORTH ALCOVE
6:30 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER: 6:45 pm

II. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Chair Chris Tom, Michael Benson, Phil Saccone, Janakiraman Balachandran, Steven Apoteker, Alex Gutierrez, Kaitlin Flynn, Anna Belak, Eugene Daneshvar

Present: Michael Benson, Phil Saccone, Alex Gutierrez, Kaitlin Flynn, Anna Belak

Excused: Eugene Daneshvar

III. CURRENT INITIATIVES & TASKS

a. Resolutions

i. Eliminating Fall break

Janet asked RSG to take a stance on this issue. Undergraduates and Masters students would probably be opposed to it. Does not really affect PhD students unless they are a GSI or if it cuts into holiday plans. University wants to hear from graduate students before putting it to the rest of the student body. RSG could consider putting out a poll to gauge graduate student support/opposition before endorsing. A resolution draft will be written by Michael and sent to the committee.

ii. Resolution for Class Bank System

Make it so that PhD candidates can take upper-level classes that are offered sporadically.

iii. Resolution to Amend the Emergency Fund Requirements

• Allow other individuals besides program/department head to write the required letter for emergency fund. Avoid privacy problems.
• Possibly postpone to later after Town Halls where we can attempt to have a discussion with the students on the topic. Kaitlin to include question in Gazette to ask students their opinion, especially regarding privacy.

iv. Resolution to Disband the Continuous Enrollment Dispute Resolution Board

CEDR isn’t used, so we can formally disband it. This is dropped from our...
v. Resolution to Require Evaluations Before Receiving Grades
   • Help GSIs and professors get meaningful feedback from
     grads/undergrads, which will either serve to enhance teaching
     abilities or goes towards tenure/salary evaluations
   • Next board meeting, ask representatives to talk to constituents
     about potentially changing the time of the evaluations or other
     possible changes to help make them more useful for the teachers.
     We need to gather more information from students, teachers, and
     CRLT and bring it back to a future meeting.

vi. Resolution to Amend the Non-Discrimination Policy of the University
    (part 2)
    • “Relationship status” was passed as part of this resolution last
      Spring. Chris will be re-introducing it to include "sexual practice"
      (or something along those lines) in the NDP.

b. SACUA Joint AAC Committee
   i. Eugene, Chris, Anna interested

c. Eugene’s inquiry for academic discrimination (see appendix)
   i. Consider forwarding it to Janet after consulting with Eugene.

d. Career Services/Consulting workshop
   Next meeting.
   i. February date?
   ii. Best practices between programs

IV. OPEN DISCUSSION
   a. Anna brought up policy regarding Spring break and conflicting
      interpretations on whether the break is also for graduate students. Add to agenda
      for next AAC meeting.

V. ACTION ITEMS
   a. [Eugene] Email information about IP issues
   b. [Phil] Email Paula and CC events director
   c. [Michael] Set up meeting with Janet for GSBOR
   d. [Chris] Set up dropbox
   e. [Everyone] Send Chris 5 survey questions for next meeting
   f. [Kaitlin] Send other committee chairs notice to gather 5 survey questions
   g. [Kaitlin] Add to Gazette a question about emergency fund policy
   h. [Michael] Invite CRLT professor to a meeting
i. [Eugene] Write draft of pamphlet regarding basics of IP for graduate students to present to committee

VI. ADJOURNMENT: 7:27 pm

VII. APPENDIX

Excerpt from Eugene

Chris,

My constituent asked me if we have the ability to request information from the Registrar's office to aid in determining if he was discriminated against in taking a course. Specifically, he wants to find out if an override was issued for any other student in a class that he was denied because of missing preqs.

Background:

• A PhD student in Engineering and Master's in Economics wanted to take a Finance course that had introductory accounting as a prereq.
• The student attended the first few classes and felt that he understood the material well and asked for an override. The instructor agreed that he would allow him to take the course.
• During class, the student pointed out a mistake in the mathematical theory of the instructor. He asked it as a question during the class, and followed up after class to point it out without embarrassing the instructor.
• The instructor seemed flustered by the realization that he may be incorrect.
• The student emailed multiple times without response to be added to the class. Later, the instructor claimed that he replied, however, the student has confirmation from ITS that no emails were sent.
• At the next class, the instructor claimed that he had misspoke and would not be able to issue the override due to the prereq needed. The instructor said that he would add the student to the CTools site, but still has not done so.
• The student believes that the instructor is treating him differently than other students and is lying to cover it up.

I've instructed the student to contact Darlene Ray Johnson.

I too have a experience that is troubling. Last term I was dis-enrolled from a class by the University's General Counsel the night before the first day of class because I was told that I had "past strained interactions " with the professor teaching the course. I did not know this was a justification for dis-enrollment. I think these two issues raise the broader question of what are our rights to take a class and under what conditions are they taken away.

I would like to propose to explore this issue by adding it to the AAC's agenda.

Thanks,

-Eugene