Rackham Student Government
Board Meeting: June 8, 2011

Agenda

I. Call To Order
II. Approval of Agenda
III. Approval of Previous Minutes
   a. May 25, 2011
IV. Officer Reports
   a. Graduate Student Body President, Michael
   b. Graduate Student Body Vice President, Josh
   c. Graduate Student Body Treasurer, Mindy
V. RSG Logistics
   a. Representative and Executive Office Hours Report
   b. July 6th Meeting
VI. Committee Reports
   a. Academic Affairs
   b. Budgetary
   c. Communications
   d. Elections
   e. Legislative
   f. Student Life
VII. Individual Project / Committee Goal Setting Session
VIII. GSRA Update
IX. Continuous Enrollment Update
   a. Dean’s Report
   b. Dispute Resolution Board Membership
   c. Next Steps
X. Open Discussion
XI. Adjournment
Rackham Student Government
Board Meeting
5-25-11

I. Call to Order
   a. Meeting Called to Order at 6:10pm.
   b. Members absent:
      ii. Unexcused: Eli Eisman, Serge Farinas, Kristy Figel, Grant Mandarino.
      iii. Quorum Present

II. Approval of Agenda
   a. Motion by Alex Emly, Seconded by Tien-Huei Hsu. Approved Unanimously

III. Approval of Previous Minutes
   a. Motion by Alex Emly, Seconded by Lily Mancour. Approved Unanimously

IV. Officer Reports
   a. President
      i. Will be starting advertising to get non-board members to be part of committees.
      ii. Will be talking about GSRA unionization elections later this meeting.
      iii. Read the Ann Arbor Chronicle if possible.
      iv. The next SAGE call will be in the next two weeks.
      v. President’s Privilege to slate Mindy Waite, Rob Gillezeau, Heidi Pedini as liaisons to the federal, state, local legislature, respectively.
      vi. Motion by David Cottrell and seconded by Alex Emly, motion approved 7-0-4.
   b. Vice President
      i. The first committee meetings of the Spring/Summer went well.
      ii. Would like to view the Communications Committee as the Committee on Committees and Communication.
      iii. It is the job of the Vice President to serve as a support role in committees. Therefore, if chairs need any help or advice, please come talk to me.
      iv. Minor Corrections on Attached Committee List
      v. Chairs of Committees please provide me a brief blurb about your committee, projects, and chair office hours, etc.
      vi. Please try to recruit non-RSG board members to serve as members of committees.
      vii. In committee minutes, please note the location of the committee meetings.
c. Treasurer
   i. About $15000 in the bank.
   ii. Please sign up to bring snacks to Board Meetings.
   iii. The upper cap is about 20.00 per meeting.
   iv. We currently have money to give out to student groups.
   v. Please look at the flier that will be sent out to Rackham Students.
   vi. Committee Chairs please submit a budget to Mindy, or she will assign you a budget.

V. RSG Logistics
a. Representative and Executive Office Hours
   i. See attached Representative and Executive Office Spreadsheet.
   ii. Mindy will make a form to briefly fill out after every office hour.
      It will be able to be done online.

b. Fall Welcome Picnic, September 2, 2011
   i. Every year this is a co-sponsored by Rackham.
   ii. This is required if you are in town and will count for one event during both Summer and Fall event requirements.
   iii. We will need volunteers from 3-10, the event will most likely last from 5pm-8pm.

VI. Committee Membership and Chairs
a. Josh Bow moves to approve Communications slate, seconded by Mindy Waite, passes unanimously.

b. Josh Bow moves to approve committee recommendations for chairs of committees, seconded by Alex Emly, motion passes unanimously.

VII. Committee Reports
a. Academic Affairs
   i. Tien Huei-Hsu motions to approve minutes, seconded by Alex Emly, approved unanimously.

b. Budgetary
   i. Will not be meeting until Budget requests are submitted.

c. Commutations
   i. There will be a Communication Committee meeting in the next week.

d. Elections
   i. No Report

E. Legislative
   i. Motion to approve minutes by Kaitlin Flynn, approved by Alex Emly. Motion passes unanimously.
   ii. Slated liaisons for Presidents approval.
   iii. Discussed SAGE fall summit.

f. Student Life
   i. Try to have 3 events a month, one cosponsored with Rackham, one family friendly, one bar night.
   ii. Will be trying to have committee meetings on Mondays.

VIII. Spring/Summer (Fall) Goal Setting Session
a. Possible Academic Goals
   i. Increase resources for professional development outside development.
   ii. Graduate Student Bill of Rights rough draft.
   iii. Town Hall meetings in the Fall
   iv. Deal with Issues with continuous enrollment
   v. Discuss possible change of the 9 point GPA scale.
   vi. Rackham Pre-doctoral fellowships standardizing to compensate for varying departments average GPA.
   vii. Study spaces for Masters Students.

b. Legislative Goals
   i. To get the SAGE fall summit organized.
   ii. Coordinate with MSA
   iii. Work along side with town citizens and unions.
   iv. Look at Government issues like EMF, Right to Work, City and Local Budgets.

c. Communications Goals
   i. Banner
   ii. Increases our presence on campus and awareness to Graduate Students.
   iii. Increase our Social Media
   iv. Newsletter

d. Financial Goals
   i. Spending money or allocating 80% of our budgetary committee budget to student groups.
   ii. Examine the $7 dollar fee to MSA from graduate students.

e. Student life Goals
   i. Get people appointed for collaborative events.
   ii. Fall Picnics.
   iii. Bill of Rights.
   iv. Whirleyball.
   v. Develop Departmental Committees for Social Events and support and foster relationships with such committees.

f. My Action Items
   i. Come up with one that you would like before next meeting.

IX. Individual Projects
a. Description
   i. Projects that you will work on personally.
   ii. If you need a budget, please let Mindy know.

b. Assignment
   i. Think about what you would like to do as an individual project.

c. Semester Plans
   i. Each representative would meet with the Executives to discuss and update individual projects.

X. GSRA Update
a. The Board of Regents voted to allow the right to organize to GSRAs.
b. We will continue to serve as education source for students.
c. We will serve as a clearinghouse to deal with student complaints during the election.
d. However, what role can we serve legally?
e. Will maintain neutrality during the election, and legislative committee will draft a response for any complaints RSG receives about the unionization election, for approval by the communications committee and the board.

XI. Open Discussion
a. None

XII. Adjournment
a. Meeting adjourned at 7:21pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Joshua Bow
Rackham Student Government
Vice President

ATTACHMENTS:

Corrected Committee Lists with Chairs

**Bold signifies chair/co chairs**
* Delineates ex officio

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RACKHAM STUDENT GOVERNMENT
Academic Committee Meeting
June 2nd, 2011
2nd floor of BORDERS, 612 E. Liberty St

I. Roll call of members at 6:07 pm.
Tien-Huei Hsu, Mindy Waite, Joshua Bow, David Cottrell, Kaitlin Flynn

Excused absences: Grant Mandarino, Anagha Kshirsagar, Anne Fitzpatrick
Unexcused absences: Eli Eisman

II. Special Business

• Graduate Student Bill of Rights (need 3 people to be working on this)

David, Kaitlin and Grant will be working on finalizing the draft. They will provide an estimated completion date by the next committee meeting (6/16)

We will also invite graduate students to participate in this process by advertising in the RSG newsletter and providing a link to a page on the RSG website where the document will be posted as a pdf. A new version of the document will be posted every week on a predetermined day of the week. A comment forum will be provided for suggestions.

Mindy will upload the document and set up the comment forum.

David, Kaitlin and Grant will be responsible for the weekly posting of updated versions.

Tien will provide a 1 to 2 sentence blurb for the newsletter.

• Town Hall Preparations

Mindy will look into getting the banner. The first Top of the Park event will begin on 6/17. We will try and have the banner before then (if possible, bring to next AA committee meeting).

Josh will make the suggestion box by the 6/8 event and hand the box to Kaitlin.

Kaitlin will attend the 6/8 Student Life event (bar night)

Josh will provide the committee with the Student Life event calendar next committee meeting.

Representatives are reminded to hold office hours. The interactions/questions we get here are another great resource for the town halls.

We discussed the format of the Fall 2011 Town Halls:

We decided to have “Lunch with the Deans” Sessions. These will be hour-long sessions which will replace the 3 separate division-specific town halls. Food will be provided by Jerusalem Garden. Students will be required to RSVP, allowing us to get a good estimate on the amount of food to provide. This provides a more informal setting where individual reps can interact with students. Since it will be during the semester, we will think about
having 2 separate sessions so students having classes will have the opportunity to attend. We will ask the Deans to send out the invitational emails to their respective students as this is likely to be more effective way of encouraging people to attend. We will also advertise in the newsletter.

**Mindy and Tien** will draft email to the Deans inviting them to join us (update expected by next committee meeting).

### III. Other issues

- **Discussion of what to take on this summer**
  1. We discussed the possibility of looking into ways to encourage students to submit semester-end evaluations. For e.g. holding back student access to grades until they have submitted their evaluations. This will benefit graduate students in the following ways:
     * Provide GSIs will more representative feedback from students
     * Ensure that professors hear back from their students (with the assumption that this will lead to improvements in the courses)
  However, problems exist:
     * How does one hold back grades? Will it be against University policy?
  2. We talked about changing the GPA system from the 9.00 scale to a 4.00 scale that is more consistent with that of other institutions. **Tien** will provide a paragraph describing why we have the current system and reasons for and against changing it (due closer to the next election date).

- **Events**
  As of right now, we will not be having any academic events this summer. However, representatives will be present at social events to solicit graduate student concerns and questions for the Town Halls. **Tien** will provide blurb for newsletter.

- **Committee meeting attendance**
  We discussed whether we would like to enforce a committee attendance policy. We decided to leave it up to the executive board to decide the terms. As we may be getting non-RSG board members attending out committee meetings, we discussed when they will be allowed to become full voting members. We decided to have it be up to the discretion of the co-Chairs.

### IV. Open Discussion

### V. Next meeting: June 16th 2011, 6pm

### VI. Adjournment
Meeting adjourned at 6:57 pm.
Attendance:
The following members were present at the start of the meeting.
Kaitlin
Tien
Alex T.
Alex E.
Patrick
Josh, Chair
Michael, ex-officio

1. Welcome
Josh welcomed everyone and explained that he hopes that this committee can serve both to direct the government's communication strategy as well as to coordinate internal communication between the government’s committees. All information that will be going out to the student body will be passing through this committee. We will be starting a newsletter (again) this summer such that we can send it out regularly. You will also note that the membership of the committee is principally committee chairs to help facilitate the following goals:

2. Goals:

- Foster communication (internal and external) as well as serving as the
- The nominating arm for committees.
- An HTML friendly website
- Social Media Presence

Alex T. volunteers to serve as the committee’s secretary.

3. Review of Draft email to the student body recruiting them to serve on the committees

Josh presented options A, B, and C (link). Option C was the consensus choice. The email addresses, will be changed to link to the committee chairs. Michael will be including a list of all RSG listservs in the next RSG Board agenda packet. The email will be sent out on Tuesday.

4. Newsletter / Newsletter Chair
Michael noted that only the three executives can send out emails to the student body and encouraged chairs to work with Josh or another executive to send out emails as needed. Josh noted that most of these communications will hopefully be included in our newsletter(s).

The committee discussed newsletter layout and noted that some information such as representative office hours should always be included. Events (upcoming) will also be included.

A. Content

The general consensus was to include short blurbs about each of the items in the newsletter and encourage people to visit the website (Via hyperlink)

B. Format

The committee agreed to include event information as well as representative officer hours and upcoming meeting information in a sidebar on each newsletter. Further, the content will be housed on the website

C. Occurrence

Weekly but produced bi-weekly. The first newsletter will be sent out on Tuesday June 21st.

D. Newsletter Editor

Alex T. volunteered to serve as the newsletter editor for the spring/summer term.

5. Committees Updates

A. Overview

Josh noted that he would like committee chairs to ensure that each committee’s meeting times, dates, and locations are on the RSG google calendar. This needs to happen prior to our sending the recruitment email on Tuesday June 7th.

B. Summer Projects

As projects come up in committees, please notify Josh. Also, please provide a BRIEF update at communications committees meetings to ensure that projects are being well staffed and are making progress.

6. Two Committee Goals by next meeting

Each chair should come up with a S.M.A.R.T. (Specific measurable attainable realistic and timely) goal by next meeting. Goals should be measurable (e.g. NOT events should be more fun). Please focus on ensuring that goals are:
1. Measurable
2. Timely
3. Attainable

7. Website

Michael discussed the website and noted that each chair will be responsible to update their sections of the website and offered his assistance to help chairs or committee secretaries having trouble with updating the website.

8. Open Discussion

A. Committee meeting time

Josh explained why 8pm on Wednesday was selected for the meeting time. However, it is up for discussion. Wednesday at 8pm was retained as the meeting time (biweekly.)

9. Adjourn

ACTION ITEMS

1. Committee chairs are to ensure that their committee meetings are on the google calendar by Friday June 3rd at 5pm

2. By the next meeting, each chair should have a general idea of what will be undertaken by the committee in the term.

3. Each chair will bring a list of events and other items to include in the first newsletter at the next committee meeting. The first newsletter will be sent on Tuesday June 21st.

4. Each committee should come up with two S.M.A.R.T. goals to present at the next communications meeting.
RACKHAM STUDENT GOVERNMENT  
Legislative Affairs Committee Meeting  
June 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2011  
Basement of Espresso Royal, 1101 S. University Ave. #2

Attendance: Tien Hui-Hsu, Kaitlin Flynn, Michael Benson, Joshua Bow, Abbie Garrity, Rob Gillezeau, Serge Farinas

Meeting start: 6:12pm

Introductions

Updates:

- Guest at next meeting: Cynthia Willbanks (VP) who works at the state level and helps lobby for student rights. Her assistant is Cindy Bank. Either will come visit this summer.

- Student Advocates for Graduate Education overview for Abbie—local, state and federal levels of input.
  - State level: Rob.
    - Engaging in state politics, entered into an agreement with Michigan State University—signed MOU. Engaging in collaborative legislative work at the state level with MSU. Meeting next week with Mike, Rob and MSU representatives to start working.
    - Research issues on the state level—look forward to an email from Rob—to discuss with Rebecca Warren at our further meetings (state senate rep).
    - Citizens veto attempt for financial advisors bill passed by Rick Snyder. Regarding emergency financial manager role that Snyder has expanded to allow firing of local officials without cause. Need 130,000 signatures. We will need to decide if we want to support the issue and if so how.
  - Local level: Heidi and Mike
    - City council approved budget for 2011-2012 and provisional budget for 2012-2013. Cut some public safety positions- 7 police, 13 in fire department. Lost some patrol officers.
    - Downtown development agency—purpose is economic development—given additional authority over parking rates. Will affect graduate students, so chair of DDA will be joining us later to discuss graduate thoughts. Mayor will also join us at the full board
meeting later in the fall, another city council member will join us in our legislative meeting this summer.

- City council elections this fall. We may have some sort of candidates forum or debate for graduate students to interact with potential city council candidates—emphasis on grad students but open to larger committee. Typically RSG has not endorsed candidates in the past but we could consider doing this upon committee and board approval. Generally, we have a culture of just encouraging students to vote.

- Send out information about voter registration—draft email for students—Tien will do this. Thanks Tien!

- Developers coming in that want to build housing for grad students and young professionals.

- University does not have own fire department and is receiving low amounts of funding from local sources. RSG would like to pursue pushing for supporting the fire department to cover our expenses. Michael is working on putting together a draft to reach out to administration and work with MSA and GEO. Potential to replace or amend city budget. One issue could be budget cuts at the University level, how could we petition for funding? This is especially salient because students don’t pay property taxes and generally don’t fund public services, especially because graduate students contribute to incidents that require fire department support. We could also sign into a contract an agreement to ensure money is put towards the funding.

  - Federal level:
    - SAGE overview—meeting with executive and judicial branches in our yearly lobbying during March/April in DC.
    - Main issues: graduate student indebtedness (www.sagecoalition.org) to examine how debt will workout for various graduate students, taxability of fellowships (changed by Reagan in 1986)

- What other issues do we want to accomplish this summer?
  - Example: Berkeley wanted to support the DREAM act but was too late for original lobbying in March/April (path for illegal immigrants to citizenship if they pursue college education)
  - Major players for SAGE: Cal, UM, MSU, UCLA, UCSD, UC Irvine, Colorado, Texas, Minnesota, UNC, UW Seattle
  - Main issues: affordability, funding and research. Also visas for international students. Childcare subsidy for GSIs, rising cost of tuition in various sites.
Compensation—would it be worth it to push for the right of teaching assistants to advocate for bargaining rights (income disparity)

- Graduate student survey on issues and tactics—ranking priorities and leaving options for extra. Could offer incentives but with tricks to encourage active participation.

- Drafting of the survey could be done next week—looking to get out early Fall to get main population of students
RACKHAM STUDENT GOVERNMENT
Student Life Committee Meeting
May 24th, 2011
STARBUCKS, 222 S. State St.

I. Welcome

II. Introductions
   o Members present:
     Ÿ Josh Bow
     Ÿ Michael Benson
     Ÿ Amit Patel
     Ÿ Alex Emly

III. Previous Work of the Committee
   o The committee has largely focused on social events in the past. This
     has exhibited through bar nights, a March Madness tournament
     bracket, Valentines party, St. Patrick’s day party, and bowling nights.
     While continuing to maintain or improved on this social calendar, it is
     the hope of the committee to venture into other aspects of student life.

IV. Committee Goals
   o More events especially since the summer is critical. Graduate
     students have more time.
   o Build relationships with student body to keep them engaged with RSG
     throughout the year.
   o Address non-academic student life issues.
   o Work with the Academic Affairs committee on the Graduate Student
     Bill of Rights.
   o Try to do more family friendly events.
   o 3 events per month (1 Bar Night/ 1 Rackham co-sponsored / 1 family
     friendly) during the summer.
   o Rent out Pinball Pete’s for a few hours for graduate students.
   o Have a family friendly swim day at Fuller Pool (Have a letter from the
     city offering a discount).

V. Rackham/RSG Co-Sponsored Events
   o Tigers Game
   o Ice Cream Social
   o Cedar Point
   o The Chair, Natalie from Rackham, and Josh Bow need to sit down and
     iron out some details.

VI. Chair Election/Selection
   o The committee unanimously approves Alex Emly as chair of the
     Student Life Committee.

VII. Adjournment
Dear Michael, Mindy, and Josh,

I am writing to you as the officers of RSG to give you an update about the Continuous Enrollment Dispute Resolution process. I hope you will share this communication with the RSG members.

As Michael will remember, we agreed in December 2009 as follows:

"Periodically during the 2010-2011 academic year, and each year thereafter, the members of the Board and the Rackham Resolution Officer will review and evaluate the work of the Board during the previous year. The Board will report to Rackham Student Government and to the Rackham Dean about its case load, its decisions, its conclusions about whether the Board is fulfilling its intended role, and whether its procedures are effective and efficient. If the Board is not working successfully, Rackham Student Government and the Rackham Dean will work together on modifications of procedure, jurisdiction, or membership. Information about the case load and outcomes will be shared with the Rackham Dean, so that the Dean and the Rackham Executive Board can be informed about emerging issues that may suggest a need for policy revisions. It is the expectation of Rackham Student Government and the Rackham Dean that the Board will play its most important role in the initial year of the implementation of the policy. After the Continuous Enrollment policy has been in effect for three years, we anticipate that this Board will be dissolved, and disputes directly related to the Continuous Enrollment Policy will be handled by the Rackham Academic Dispute Resolution Policy."

In accordance with that agreement, I am reporting about the experience of the Board during the 2010-2011 academic year. Student board members were recruited and selected by RSG in the summer and early fall. The student board members received training in dispute resolution from Darlene Ray-Johnson, who is Rackham's resolution officer.

Students were notified about the availability of the dispute resolution board through a variety of channels: through several e-mail communications to all Ph.D. Students, several listings in the Rackham newsletter, announcements to the Doctoral Student Forum, and posting on Rackham's web site. In addition, faculty members who serve as graduate directors and student services staff were notified repeatedly about the availability of the dispute resolution board, so that they could refer students to the process.

So far, no disputes have been brought forward. Some individual cases did come to the
attention of Rackham staff, as individual students requested assistance in working with faculty in their graduate programs to resolve their personal situations. In all cases, we were able to work informally with students and faculty to achieve an appropriate resolution.

I suggest that we continue to make the board available to all Ph.D. students in the coming academic year; I request that RSG again identify students willing to serve as board members.

Janet

--
Janet A. Weiss
Vice Provost and Dean
Rackham Graduate School
University of Michigan
915 E. Washington St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1070
(734) 764-4401
Fellow Graduate Students,

Election season is fast approaching. Are YOU registered? There's an easy way to check. The 2011 City Council Primary Election is around the corner on August 2 and the General Election will be held on November 8. To vote you must be a US citizen and at least 18 years of age. To register for the City election, you must be a resident of Ann Arbor for at least 30 days prior to the election.

How do I register?

Registration is easy! The Secretary of State website provides a mail-in form. Fill out the form and send to the designated address. If you choose to register by mail, you must show up in person the first time you vote (exceptions may apply). Registration must be done at least 30 days prior to the election.

Who is up for election?

Each year one of the two council seats from each of the City's five wards is up for election. Each City councilmember serves a two-year term. There is no mayoral election; the Mayor is only elected in even-year elections.

Not sure why to vote in the City Elections?

The City Council is in charge of the city's annual budget and determines city law and policies. You should vote because the people who are elected will have a direct impact on our lives as residents. It is in our interest to have a part in shaping the society that we live in (and to decide how your tax money is being spent). Voting is a chance to exercise our citizenship.

Not sure where to vote?

There's a list of polling locations (listed by municipality) offered by the county clerk's office. The Ann Arbor city clerk's office also offers a map of precincts with locations of polling places within each precinct.

For more information, visit the following sites:

City of Ann Arbor: http://www.a2gov.org/
Washtenaw County: http://www.ewashtenaw.org/
Secretary of State website: http://www.michigan.gov/sos
Voter Information Center: https://webapps.sos.state.mi.us/mivote/

We will be sending emails and hosting events in the near future to help you stay current with the upcoming elections.

-Your Rackham Student Government