RACKHAM STUDENT GOVERNMENT
BOARD MEETING
March 29, 2012
RACKHAM GRADUATE BUILDING
2ND FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM, NORTH AlCOVE
6:30 P.M.

Attendance: Eli Benchell Eismen, Chris Tom, Anna Wagner, Haven Allen, Ben Curtiss-Lusher, Daniel Trubman, Kaitlin Flynn, Alex Toulouse, Michael Benson

Absent (excused): Tien Huei-Hsu, Lauren Knapp, Alex Emly, Andrew Crawford, Patrick Rooney, Nina White, Marisol Ramos, Pete McGrath

1. Call to order: 6:40pm
2. Approval of the Agenda: Motion by Heidi, seconded by Haven. Motion by Dan seconded by Haven to move the guest speaker to section IV. Motion by Chris and seconded by Alex T to postpone the public hearing for the sexual practices resolution. Heidi objects to moving it. Kaitlin clarifies that publicizing this would perhaps increase turnout. Michael clarifies that this item has returned to the agenda because we postponed it only for one week so that is why it’s on the agenda again. Haven asks if we are supposed to have a 2nd reading prior to the public hearing and Michael indicates that we will likely vote on it. 6-1-3 the reading is postponed. Heidi moves to add a discussion of the sexual practices resolution to the end of the meeting and seconded by Ben. Approved with one abstention.

3. Approval of previous minutes: the minutes are provided in raw format and Michael asks that we not approve them at this time. Additionally, the election results are raw and Michael asks that we do not distribute them until the results are confirmed.

4. Jill McDonough, Director of Development and Alumni Relations- Guest speaker. Jill is working hard on the Rackham Centennial events. These events have been very successful this year. These include career roundtables, the research conference, the Jorge Cham event and more—the turnout for all of these events has been very high. Their next event is with Jonathan Cole who will be discussing the future of graduate education. Another upcoming event will involve alumni gatherings in Taipei and Seoul. In October, a number of Rackham Centennial lectures will take place. In November, a donor recognition luncheon will occur. Jill would love to get any ideas or thoughts for a closing event in November, something in line with the fun opening event for students. Michael brings up perhaps hosting a graduate student formal or formal affair for students and faculty (?). Heidi also seconds that and suggests a play, art exhibit or concert. Eli suggests highlighting top researchers who have received Rackham predoctoral fellowship. Michael mentions including and highlighting Master’s students. Kaitlin suggests a concert, perhaps with NoMo or another jazz/funk local band. Jill asks if we have RSG committees working on the semiformal. Jill will follow up with Alex T and Alex E. Jill’s email is jillmcd@umich.edu and she welcomes suggestions. Michael also mentions that UM will be hosting the SAGE fall conference. Heidi suggests putting the event on the Rackham building terraces. Haven asks Jill if there would be alumni pushback on
changing the GPA scale and Jill answers likely no. Michael asks where the alumni money raised from Jill’s office goes and she answers that donor money goes primarily to the students. Heidi asks if the donors can choose which graduate students get their funding. Jill answers no, there is a firewall up to protect from any conflicts of interest. Eli asks if there are pots of money are not used up every year by giving to graduate students. Jill answers that that was once the case, but now due to budget issues, most funds get tapped in one way or another. Chris asks about the stigma associated with nontraditional graduate students and if a fellowship could be created and how one might be able to go about creating such a fellowship. Jill answers that she would be the person to ask, but there may be a fellowship already available for these students. But, if there is still an interest, it would be worth discussing with a director of development like herself would be the next step. Jill also mentions that the increase in student philanthropy on campus has been wonderful for her office. Eli supports this idea and points out that the undergraduate group Project Wolverine is becoming quite successful and adding this on to the graduate level or the professional student level.

5. **Officer reports**
   a. **Michael Benson, RSG President**: The law school student senate met with Michael and are looking to separate from CSG. A similar meeting is planned for next week with the medical school student council. UM also won the bid to host the SAGE fall summit. The election went well and we are in the process of verifying write-in candidates. Bylaws are included in the packet.
   b. **Kaitlin Flynn, RSG Vice President**: The GAC is taking place this Friday at MSU. About 50 students will be presenting. Also we attended SAGE in DC but will talk more about that later. Finally the bylaws have been updated and we’ll discuss later on the agenda.
   c. **Alex Toulouse, RSG treasurer**: $23,595 in the account but will drop after reimbursements. Budget requests are coming through and we will discuss later. Updated budget is not accurate so an updated version will be provided next week.

6. **SAGE updates**: Motion to postpone until next week when we will have more board members here by Dan, seconded by Ben. Heidi supports Dan’s mention.

7. **Winter 2012 Election Results**: Michael describes the problems with the elections and that some divisions have candidates with only one vote and so we are trying to figure out if they want to be representatives. Dan says that there is something from fundamentally wrong with students who only have one vote being able to get a seat when people who have more votes in other divisions. Alex mentions that he would support giving the extra seats to individuals who actually received votes. Kaitlin mentions that while it does seem like students who receive more votes should get seats, it would create a supermajority of students from one program or one division (as is currently the case in Biological chemistry, public policy and chemistry programs). Heidi asks if Dan has a better idea for how it could work. Dan mentions that he doesn’t want a supermajority but still doesn’t support people who have only one vote being able to get a seat. Eli says that he disagrees and says that it is the responsibility of the delegate to contact all constituents. Anna asks if traditionally the president and vice president run together. Michael and Kaitlin answer that yes
this is typically how it goes and is in the bylaws. Anna disagrees with that’s how it should be. Michael explains that the treasurer is appointed by the president and that generally it’s up to the president to choose his executive board. Chris comments that we don’t govern by mandate and that if anyone gets voted in and does a good job we should give them a chance to run. Haven asks what’s preventing board members from ‘just voting for our friends’ and Kaitlin responds ‘isn’t that what you guys did?’ referring to the election of the three Ford School Division III representatives.

8. Graduate Student Bill of Rights: the final version is included without the enforcement piece and we will vote on it next week.

9. Rackham GPA: Haven presents a weighted 4.0 GPA scale as a memorandum including academic peers using each system. Haven makes a motion to adopt this weighted scale as the supported RSG system and Dan seconds. Alex T asks what the purpose of an E is and Heidi clarifies that a course with an E is not allowed to be retaken. He also asks why not to use a 4.3/4.3 scale and Ben clarifies that this is to make it more universally accepted. Kaitlin clarifies that additionally the students in the Fall election voted on having a 4.0 scale. Eli asks if this affects people who have already received degrees and their GPAs and the answer is no. Alex T motions to call to question, Kaitlin seconds. Unanimous vote. Roll call vote for this proposal and by a vote of 9-0-1 it is approved.

10. Winter 2012 Bylaw Amendments: Motion by Eli to add COSAC to the bylaws and seconded by Heidi, it’s unanimous. This will be in first readings until next week. Kaitlin walks through the edits and notes that MSA to CSG switch will need to take place. Kaitlin also mentions that the funding issue with class projects. The language has been changed.

a. Ben suggests that we move the Projects in which students are receiving course credit for completion. Motion seconded by Eli. Alex and Michael object. Alex notes that moving this to the “may require additional information, section 9” would be ambiguous. Michael notes that he would rather see the language stay in section 10 but add “components of” to the beginning.

b. Michael moves to amend Ben’s motion to insert “components of” prior to the language. Seconded by Chris. The board discussed Michael’s motion. 4 – 6 fails.

c. Ben makes a friendly amendment to add f. to read “Symposia or presentations related to class projects in which students are receiving course credit but are not explicitly required under the course” Approved unanimously.

d. Kaitlin notes that the divisions are updated.

e. Alex notes that urban planning has always been in Division 3 but Pete will retain his current seat. Discussion continues.

f. Kaitlin closes discussion with the caveat that we will fix the changes of MSA to CSG, addition of COSAC and addition of new language to the budgetary committee.

11. Committee Reports

a. Academic affairs: minutes approval moved by Chris and seconded by Alex T, approved with two abstentions. Town hall event is next Tuesday, please come and get your constituents to come.
b. Budgetary committee: motion to accept the minutes by Alex T and seconded by Chris, approved with 3 abstentions.

c. Communications committee: newsletter coming out Monday, blurbs for full flyer needed by Sunday.

d. Elections committee: still verifying write in candidates and hope to have figured out within a week.

e. Legislative affairs: forums being done for local housing ordinance. The GSRA unionization bill is being taken up by Ingham county court.

f. Student life: bowling event on Saturday, sending out doodle for volunteers.

g. Bylaw review: done.

h. COSAC: DP day this Saturday with 24 people signed up to do downtown gardening. April 28 H4H date confirmed.

12. Sexual Practices Resolution: Heidi makes some points regarding this motion and Michael moves to postpone discussion until the full board can make it. Heidi will email out her points to the board.

13. Open Discussion: Haven makes the point that the sexual practices inclusion in the bill of rights and bylaws means that we should decide on the practice first before pushing. Ben makes the point that the agendas are getting a little long. Kaitlin makes the suggestion that perhaps we could do committee reports biweekly or something else.