Rackham Student Government
Board Meeting: October 8, 2014

Agenda

I. Call To Order
II. Approval of Agenda
III. Approval of Previous Minutes
   a. October 1, 2014
IV. Appointment of new RSG representatives
V. Committee Slates
VI. Officer Reports
   a. Graduate Student Body President, Phil
   b. Graduate Student Body Vice President, Chuky
   c. Graduate Student Body Treasurer, Benson
VII. SAGE Fall Summit
   a. Review of agenda
   b. Approval of delegation
VIII. Committee Reports
   a. Academic Affairs
   b. Budgetary
   c. Communications Committee
   d. Legislative Affairs
   e. Student Life
IX. Open Discussion
X. Adjourn

Included in packet:
RSG Board Minutes October 1 (p. 2)
Committee Slates Revised (p. 9)
SAGE Fall Summit Agenda (p. 11)
SAGE White Papers, Spring DoH 2014 (p. 15)
I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:10pm

a. Present: Representatives DaveM, Malcom Tariq, Sidney Ellington, Pat Pannuto, David B, Stefan, David W, Vice President Mbagwu

b. Absent:

c. Excused: Kyle Lady, Mike Hand, Pier Davis, Michael Benson, President Saccone

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion to approve: DavidM, second: Pat. Passes Unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Motion to approve: Pat P, second: Stefan. Passes Unanimously.

Guest:

Holly Ryder Milkovich (sp?). Director of SAPAC (Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center).

RSG recently pushing for efforts to have all faculty trained w.r.t. sexual awareness, not just new hires.

Chuky: Intro from Holly.

Holly: We (SAPAC / colleagues) have been working with RSG / others to develop and finalize our new U policy; passed last August. Since then, federal government has passed new regulations, in particular new faculty and staff (counts grad/prof students) are required to pass training. Result from meetings, federal requirements are only partial – missing bits: sexual harassment in workplace, info on difficulties that are unique to the academic work environment, challenges on dual student/employee roles, no info on alcohol / other drug use. Undergrads often know about campus resources, but graduate body generally doesn’t.

Original goal: Purchase a training program. Nothing to purchase, too new of an idea. Many places copied over the undergrad training, but that’s not really appropriate. The U is currently figuring out which of build or buy some kind of online training that either way will require some wholesale construction by the U of our specific needs. Building this final training will take some time. As of Oct 1, what exists now is an online training following the MyLink program; not as interactive / engaging as necessary. Has all of the minimum material, but really isn’t the final product.
Stage II is the next plan which will include in-person meetings and program-specific training and elements. That said, Stage I meets the federal minimums so moving forward as quickly may be harder, but that’s what we’re beginning to undertake now. That’s what we’re here for now is to check in with graduate students and other orgs as we start the process of building this new piece.

This year, faculty/staff are getting the same training as grad students.

The fact remains, with only incoming staff getting trained, we have a 50-year window until everyone on campus is trained.

Sidney: And that’s the concern that triggered the resolution in the first place.

Holly: Yes, and we’ve heard the most resistance from the older faculty. The resistance isn’t specific to the subject matter, really it’s just resistance to any form of mandatory training at all.

What punishments are actually available?

Holly: Not a lot available from the (federal) top. Institutionally, we can do more. Language will have “mandatory”, people that don’t can get letters / pressures from their dean.

Chris: The AAC (academic affairs committee of SACUA) endorses the spirit of the resolution, but the committee doesn’t endorse the specific requirements laid out by the resolution. They endorse having training that is above and beyond the legal mandate, but don’t necessarily agree with the RSG plans.

Chris: My question, it falls on the university if this policy isn’t “robustly” implemented? What happens in the case of a faculty accusation?

Holly: They follow the faculty grievance procedure, which is substantively different in the case of a student. The victim/survivor has many fewer rights in this process. If someone found responsible, the survivor will learn the outcome (whether or not guilty) but will not learn of the repercussions, if any.

Chris: Is there any movement to change?

Holly: I’ve advocated. The position is that it would violate the right to privacy for employee actions to be made public. What happens instead are assurances that the department/management will take action. There is also no appeal option on the faculty side, either way.

DaveM: In that case, why don’t people just go to local authorities, outside the U?

Holly: I would support someone being well-educated and able to choose any of their available avenues.
Pat: Can I re-phrase his question? In many cases, the victim has potentially two tracks, through the U or through a separate police entity, how do you decide which avenue to pursue or how to pursue them?

Holly: Not all behavior that is harassment is criminal in nature. Second, county prosecutor makes all decisions on whether to move forward on a case. In particular, our county prosecutor tends to not prosecute cases with unclear recall, a previous relationship, or alcohol involvement. Many of the U cases fall into this

Sidney: This is all very context based

Holly: Yes. And every situation is obviously unique. Most folks are interested in healing resources, protecting themselves more.

Chris: What protections are there against retaliation.

Holly: Yes, there are protections independent of outcome. What’s really challenging are the more subtle and difficult to track ways in which retaliation can occur, especially in smaller, tighter-knit communities, e.g. those where introductions or recommendations are critical.

Sidney: Yes, especially with things like private recommendation letters.

Holly: Yes, or not even bad, but the “somewhat warm” or “good enough” letter versus the robust strong letter that may have been written otherwise.

Holly: Yes, and I’ve also recommended that you have a recommendation letter sent to a trusted colleague to check for this. I have seen this tactic successfully reveal issues before.

Holly: There are many institutional specific elements. E.g. the SPG that we have control over.

Chuky: In your intro you mentioned that our specific student issues should arrive in ~a year, and faculty will have a separate branch, what will all that look like?

Holly: It will have components specific to grad students as research, as students, and as teachers. For faculty / staff it will have training to identify if they’re experiencing sexual harassment or what it means to harass. Also specific training on the contexts in which they are acting in their capacity as a faculty member, e.g. out in the field where harassment can still occur. Other sensitivities around things like planning bar crawls, wine & cheese dinners, etc on how to be careful with people.

Sidney: Can the training be used as a “stick” to enforce training attendance for incoming hires?
Holly: Yes, for all employees except faculty. There are very few rules that apply to faculty, they don’t have to attend an orientation, they don’t have to fill out timesheets, etc. For the hospital, there are some more enforced rules. The only real decision that must be made is whether they want a parking pass. New this year is the criminal background check, and that is actually enforced (read: will hold paychecks), unclear if this can qualify as well.

DaveM: Could it be structured as a rider to promotions?

Holly: Yes, that is an option. An as institutional will builds we may see more of these.

Sidney: Can it also act as a rider to the criminal background check, e.g. part of that process?

Holly: Again, it will rely on institutional will.

DaveM: Background checks are not hard to get / have done.

Holly: Right, and UM policy now states that all employees will consent to this and they will hold up paychecks.

Chris: I think the idea of tying to promotion is a great idea. That makes this a 7-year timeline, not 50. I was wondering if you’ve talked with GEO at all?

Holly: Short answer, no. I need to preserve my ability to work both sides of the house and not be seen as an adversary to any group. Need to act as a mediator, communicator, between groups. I don’t think it would be effective for me to bring a project to GEO, but if GEO has a project related to these issues I’d be happy to support them.

Chuky: It seems like the policies for new faculty are strong and we really need to focus on the 50-year problem. Where is the next place this effort is going?

Holly: The next goal is Stage II for grad students and faculty/staff. We really want an in-person training as well as the online training. Continuing to build support in SACUA and around the idea that this is training that is part of being a good citizen of the UM community. And partially following the lead of the Provost, the President, and the Office for Civil Rights, where there’s some turmoil now. Kind of exciting with a new President, he seems willing to take bold stands. I’ve been asked to report to the Regents on Oct 18. I will share the situation with them then (good plan for incoming, big gap for current). And we will see if this is something the president’s office wants to take up.

5-10 years from now, how do you evaluate how effective this program is?

Holly: Campus climate assessments. Finding the range of underreported events. We have a robust system for undergrads, looking to put things in place for graduate students and
faculty / staff. We have beautiful data for undergraduate population, need more elsewhere.

Visitor: Is there an arm in SAPAC dedicated to grad / faculty / staff or one big entity?

Holly: We are one big system. Lots of volunteers / members, though mostly undergraduates. There’s a men’s activism, lots of mentoring and activism. Our staff serves the entire community.

Chuky: Been very helpful, good discussion.

Holly: I’m pretty excited about where we are now. We are making a big change. Gone from only a few getting some information in context of teaching / work. Now, all incoming students are receiving at least some information on what their rights and responsibilities are. Seems to be some culture change around this issue.

S: What more ideas do you think need to be looked at moving forward.

Holly: Mandated delivered vs. mandated completed. Focusing on completion for all faculty / staff. I like the idea of attaching this kind of training as a rider or at least a consideration for advancement. Faculty are the hardest group. Finding allies in those groups. And we’ll see what the Office for Civil Rights does.

Chuky: We would like to continue working with you on this, through our resolution, through holding forums, and other opportunities that are available.

Holly: Yes, and the fact that there’s no result details passed back down is particularly weird.

Chuky: Yes, and the power dynamic in particular make this weird for us.

Chris: One last question. W.r.t. SACUA, we’ve talked to AAC, are committee for inclusive U and committee on civil liberties people to talk to?

Holly: I don’t know them, but we’ll have to reach out.

S: More info on the student / faculty disparity.

Holly: It’s in the statement of rights & responsibilities / other info, also all in the training. We can send some of that out.

Chris: I think a one-page side-by-side document would go a long way towards effecting change.

Holly: That’s something I should be able to get to you in a week.
Chuky: Any last questions? We appreciate you coming by to speak with us.

Holly: Any final things, please come talk to me. Conversations with me are private and protected by state law.

IV. OFFICER REPORTS
   a. President Phillip Saccone
      <not present, covered by VP>

   b. Vice President Chuky Mbagwu
      Website / communications updated. All minutes from board are up, but need to get committee minutes up. Next gazette coming out in two weeks, please send info, events, etc.

   c. Treasurer
      Have ~19,000+ still.

SAGE FALL SUMMIT
UM was a key partner in founding this. Coalition of graduate student groups. Aims to present white papers each spring in DC.

Chris: Where is that?
College Station, TX. In ~3 weeks, last weekend of October.
Also coming up will be forming a delegation for that summit, which we will talk about next week.

V. COMMITTEE UPDATES
   a. Academic Affairs Committee
      Did not meet this week. Met last week. Meetings will be scheduled for after board meetings every/other week.

   b. Budgetary Committee
      Met today. Total of 3 applications out, 2 pending. Minutes next week.

   c. Legislative Affairs Committee
      Basically the SAGE fall summit update. Chairs are not here this week, detailed update coming next week. Election forum currently being planned for regent candidates on October 27.

   d. Student Life Committee
      Chairs are out this week. Meeting time is still open.

VI. OPEN DISCUSSION
VII. ADJOURNMENT at 8:05pm.
Motion to adjourn by DaveM, second Stefan. Passes Unanimously.
Rackham Student Government Committee
Assignments Fall 2014 (revised)

**Academic Affairs**
Patrick P.
Malcom T.
Stefan T.
Peir D.
Kyle L
Myra L.
Buke H.

**Legislative Affairs Committee**
Dave M.
Michael B.
David B.
Yang Z.
David W.
Myra L.
Buke H.
Abneris R.

**Student Life Committee**
Sidney E.
Yang Z.
Malcolm T.
Kyle L.
Mike H.
Peir D.
Nate H.
Abneris R.

**Budgetary Committee**
Dave M.
Patrick P.
Stefan T.
Sidney E.
David W.
Fall 2014 Summit
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
23-26 October 2014
Thursday, 23 October

TBD  **Flight Arrivals** - George Bush Intercontinental, William P. Hobby, Easterwood Airports

7:00 PM  Depart - HOTEL

7:30 PM  Dinner - Ozona Bar & Grill or Café Eccell

Friday, 24 October

7:00 AM  **Breakfast** - HOTEL

8:30 AM  Depart - HOTEL

8:45 AM  Arrive - Texas A&M University - University Center

9:00 AM  **Welcome and Policy Updates**
Memorial Student Center - Room 1400

Student Advocates for Graduate Education
Katie Lavoie - Chairperson
Phillip Saccone - Vice Chairperson
Nicole Robinson - Director of Communications
Erin Coghlan - Political Director
Chris Lizotte, Long Term Planning Director

Texas A&M University
Mr. Michael O'Quinn - Vice President for Governmental Relations
Dr. Diane Hurtado - Associate Vice President For Federal Relations
Christopher Lyons - Graduate and Professional Student Council President

University of Texas at Austin
Ellyn Perrone - Associate Vice President for Research-Federal Relations, SAGE Advisor

10:45 AM  Depart - Texas A&M University - University Center

11:00 AM  Arrive - Texas A&M University - West Campus

11:00 AM  **International Ocean Discovery Program Tour**
Integrated Ocean Drilling Building

12:00 PM  Depart - Texas A&M University - West Campus

12:15 PM  Arrive - HOTEL

*change into business professional attire
1:00 PM  Depart - HOTEL

1:15 PM  Arrive - Texas A&M University - Central Campus

1:15 PM  Lunch - C&Js BBQ
           Cain Hall - B139

2:15 PM  The Business of Academia: Facing the Financial, Administrative, and
3:30 PM  Scholarly Changes of Higher Education Summit
           Interdisciplinary Life Sciences Building - Auditorium

4:00 PM  Depart - Texas A&M University - Central Campus

4:00 PM  Reception
           TBD
           Dr. Karen Butler-Purry - Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies

6:00 PM  Depart - TBD

6:00 PM  Arrive - HOTEL

7:15 PM  Depart - HOTEL

7:30 PM  Dinner - Murphy’s Law | Pub and Brauhaus
           Downtown Bryan

Saturday, 25 October

7:00 AM  Breakfast - HOTEL

8:30 AM  Depart - HOTEL

8:45 AM  Arrive - Texas A&M University - University Center

9:00 AM  Discussion - Advocacy Issues
           John J. Koldus Student Services Building - Room 110

11:15 AM  Depart - Texas A&M University - University Center

11:30 AM  George Bush Presidential Library and Museum Tour

12:30 PM  Depart - George Bush Presidential Library and Museum
12:45 PM  Arrive - Texas A&M University - University Center

12:45 PM  **Lunch - TBD**  
John J. Koldus Student Services Building - Room 110 - OR - The University Club  
*schedule may change to allow business casual/working attire

2:00 PM  **Discussion** - Advocacy Issues

4:30 PM  **Discussion** - Best Practices, Member Recruitment, Outreach

5:45 PM  Depart - Texas A&M University - University Center

6:00 PM  Arrive - HOTEL  
*change into business professional attire

7:15 PM  Depart - HOTEL

7:30 PM  **Dinner**  
Residence  
*Mr. Tom Reber - Interim Vice President for Student Affairs*

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**Sunday, 26 October**

8:30 AM  Depart - HOTEL

8:45 AM  Arrive - Texas A&M University - University Center

8:45 AM  **Breakfast** - TBD  
J. Earl Rudder Tower - Room 501

9:00 AM  **Discussion** - Outstanding Business

12:00 PM  **Adjournment**

12:00 PM  **Lunch**  
Northgate District

TBD  **Flight Departures** - George Bush Intercontinental, William P. Hobby, Easterwood Airports
SAGE Federal Legislative Priorities

Student Debt and Taxation

Student Debt: A Growing Obstacle for Attaining a Graduate Education: The outstanding student loan balance—$1 trillion according to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau—surpasses credit card debt.¹ 69.6% of graduate students hold student loans with an average cumulative debt of $47,503.² The reduction in many student aid programs in addition to the increase in the cost of education is making the financial burden of an advanced education overwhelming.

SAGE Recommends:
• Amend the new Income Based Repayment rules to apply to all outstanding federal student loans, make Income Based Repayment installments regionally sensitive to cost of living, and exclude forgiven student loan debt from taxable income.

“Qualified Higher Education Expenses” Not Defined as Originally Intended: The Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) defines the cost of attendance for higher education as the total cost of education, including tuition, fees, books, supplies, housing, etc. In 1986, changes in tax law uniquely disadvantaged graduate students, making portions of fellowship and student aid, such as room and board, taxable income.

SAGE Recommends:
• Amend the tax code to define “Qualified Higher Education Expenses” and “Qualified Tuition and Related Expenses” to match the definition of “Cost of Attendance” in section 472 of the HEA.

Research Funding

Funding Federal Research is Crucial to Our Country’s Economy: The U.S. economy is dependent on groundbreaking research at leading research universities. If the U.S. is to remain a global leader in innovation and technology development, Congress should maintain or increase federal funding of graduate research, which produces cures to diseases, new technology, and a more powerful workforce.

SAGE Recommends:
• Congress should maintain, if not increase, federal funding of research.

Immigration

Visa Reform: Allow World’s Brightest to Create American Jobs: Domestic universities are global leaders that attract the best and brightest international students in pursuit of graduate and professional degrees. SAGE believes that changes to our visa system should be enacted to lower the barriers to permanent residency and incentivize international graduate students to stay in the United States permanently.

SAGE Recommends:
• Reforms to establish a moving cap based on demand for H1-B visas, grant work permits for spouses of visa holders, exempt students earning a masters or higher degree in a STEM field in the U.S. from the numerical limits on EB visas.
• F-1 visa reforms to include the lifting of work restrictions and authorization of dual intent.

Student Debt and Taxation Policies

How to Support the Next Generation of Innovators and Educators

Education Taxation Policy and Student Debt: An obstacle for graduate education

Graduate students become the innovators, job creators, and leaders who provide the basis for the economic and intellectual advantage that the United States maintains across the globe. The continued decline in graduate student aid programs coupled with an increase in the cost of education makes the financial burden of graduate education overwhelming. The Budget Control Act of 2011 eliminated direct subsidized loans for graduate students; a critical resource that afforded over $10 billion in 2010 to students to pursue their graduate degrees. Students are required to finance a large share of their education, resulting in over $1 trillion of outstanding student loan debt. The regulatory and tax infrastructure that supports education has not kept pace with the increasing financial stress encountered by students.

SAGE Recommends:

- Support the American Opportunity Tax Credit Act of 2013 (HR 1738)
- Make permanent expiring and keep existing Higher Education Tax Provisions
  - American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC), IRC Sec. 25A
  - Student Loan Interest Rate Deductions, IRC Sec. 221
- Support Income Dependent Educational Assistance
  - Modifications to existing IBR programs to allow for regional sensitivity
  - ExCEL Act, HR 1716.
- Support legislation that limits the debt liability for struggling students
  - Student Loan Fairness Act, HR 1330
  - Student Loan Borrowers Bill of Rights Act, HR 3892
- Support the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program in its existing form

Optimizing the tax code to address affordability in higher education

Support the AOTC Act of 2013. The AOTC Act of 2013 modifies the current deduction to include a cost of living adjustment, allows a lifetime limit on such credit to $15,000, and makes permanent this simplified education related tax provision that will allow students and families to gain better access to higher education. Additionally, the AOTC Act of 2013 will correct a conflict in the current tax code by allowing the AOTC to count toward expenses that Pell Grants do not cover.

Make permanent the Student Loan Interest Rate Deduction. This allows students to reduce the amount of income that is subject to tax by up to $2,500 for qualified education expenses. This deduction is particularly important as student’s transition to the workforce and making ends meet is most challenging.

Amend the tax code to define “Qualified Higher Education Expenses” and “Qualified Tuition and Related Expenses” to match the definition of “Cost of Attendance” in section 472 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA). In 1986, changes in tax law limited this definition making portions of fellowship and student aid ineligible for higher education tax incentives. These include the lifetime learning credit and tax deductions on scholarship and fellowship monies. Current tax law limits “qualified higher education expenses” to tuition and registration fees only. By excluding income used for basic living expenses such as room and board from a qualified educational deduction, this limitation has a direct impact on the affordability of graduate education.
Improving student loan programs and protecting struggling students

Modify current IBR programs to include regional sensitivity and account for cost of living. Evidence suggests that the high amount of student loan debt incurred by many individuals does not exceed the value of their education, and yet the default rate on student loans is at an all time high. This has led some to conclude that the nation faces a repayment crisis rather than a debt crisis in terms of student loans. One mechanism to make student debt and repayment more manageable is Income Based Repayment (IBR). However, the success of this program has been limited as a result of low student enrollment, the lack of regional sensitivity in calculating payment plans, and limitations on which loans are eligible.

Support the ExCEL Act. The ExCEL Act combines all existing federal student loans into a single Income Based Educational Assistance (IDEA) Loan program. This will greatly reduce the complexity of the current program, afford greater protection to borrowers, and streamline payments by linking them to federal withholding. Enrollment is automatic and everyone is required to participate. It is estimated that this program will save the federal government money by reducing the number of defaults and fees associated with debt collection.

Support for students suffering from financial hardship.

Support the Student Loan Borrower’s Bill of Rights Act. This act removes educational loans from the list of debts that are non-dischargeable in bankruptcy.

Support the Student Loan Fairness Act. This law will limit repayment for qualified borrowers to 10% of their discretionary income and limit the interest capitalization to 10% of the principle. After 120 eligible months, the loan is forgiven tax-free. Under current loan forgiveness programs, those who qualify are left with an unreasonable tax burden when the loan is discharged which is exactly the type of financial burden these individuals cannot afford. Loan forgiveness would also be capped under this new legislation to encourage borrowers and colleges to utilize loans more judiciously.

Support the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. The PSLF is designed to encourage and support students to work in public service. Under the PSLF individuals with a graduate degree who go on to work in government, in a non-for profit organization, or as a teacher, receive loan forgiveness on Direct Loans after making 120 consecutive payments. SAGE supports the PSLF as is, and believes any effort to place a cap on the amount of debt that can be forgiven, or to limit the availability of this program, will discourage those with an graduate degree from entering public service.

1 Susan Dynarski and Daniel Kreisman, Loans for Educational Opportunity: Making Borrowing Work for Today’s Students (Brookings Institute, 2013)
2 We use “Income Based Repayment” (IBR) as the general term for all income based programs including the 2009 and 2014 versions of IBR, Income Contingent Repayment (ICR), and Pay as You Earn.
Cuts to Research Funding Put America’s Future at Risk

1With the deferment of sequestration for two years, the U.S. has been able to continue to fund groundbreaking research. However, if the lack of emphasis on research continues, the U.S. may lose their global lead in R&D investment. Congress should expand federal funding of basic research, which leads to cures for diseases, new technology, a more powerful workforce and keeps the U.S. globally competitive.

Continued improvement for quality of life is directly and indirectly due to investment in R&D. The United States is currently one of the largest investors in R&D, but federal investment in R&D has remained flat the last few years while other countries are steadily increasing their investment in R&D. While we appreciate that R&D has not been ravaged by spending cuts, investment stagnation inhibits economic growth. Halted economic growth is harmful to Americans and to the global community. We must increase our spending in R&D so to create jobs and continue to grow our economy.

Results of Federal Funding for Graduate Research

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<th>Agency</th>
<th>President’s FY15</th>
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<tr>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>$ 5.8 billion</td>
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<td>NASA SMD</td>
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<td>DOE OoS</td>
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<td>DOE Ed IES</td>
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National Science Foundation (NSF)
SAGE Recommends: $7.5B
NSF funds research and supports science, math, and engineering education across the country, in all 50 states. NSF funded the graduate student-driven project that grew to be Google, currently worth an estimated $250 billion and employing 54,000 people.

National Institutes of Health (NIH)
SAGE Recommends: $32B
NIH is the nation’s primary agency for supporting cutting-edge biomedical research with the goals of improving health and saving lives through medical discovery and scientific leadership. The NIH-funded Human Genome Project has accrued over $796 billion since its inception, a 141:1 return on investment.

1 2014 Global R&D Funding Forecast, December 2013, Battelle
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Science Mission Directorate

**SAGE Recommends: $5.25B**

The NASA Science Mission Directorate outlines specific, unanswered questions concerning the Earth, Solar System and Universe to be answered through the utilization of NASA resources and capabilities. NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory developed a Global Positioning System to track satellite positions in real time that is now utilized in our phones and navigation devices.

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)

**SAGE Recommends: $155M**

NEH is the lead federal agency focused on the dissemination of knowledge and how it relates to social, economic, and political challenges facing the world today. NEH funding supports important historical projects such as the publication of the papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. and an exhibit concerning the American Revolution on the Frontier.

Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science

**SAGE Recommends: $5.22B**

The DOE Office of Science funds scientific research for energy production and supports the development and operation of open-access scientific facilities. Funding from the DOE Office of Science enabled the path of carbon in photosynthesis to be mapped, which has direct application in solar energy research.

National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

**SAGE Recommends: $462M**

NOAA conducts crucial research related to our oceans and atmosphere that provide federal and local decision-makers with important services that enhance the nation's economy, security, and environmental understanding. Particularly, the Sea Grant program is a nationwide network of 30 university-based programs that work with coastal communities on research and outreach to promote better understanding, conservation, and use of our coastal resources.

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)

**SAGE Recommends: $2.91B**

Pentagon officials recognize and hail the importance of basic research to keep our military armed with cutting edge technology and to provide our soldiers with the tools necessary to succeed on the battlefield. DARPA has played an important role in funding high-risk, high-reward research, which has led to many significant defense technologies, such as air-force tactical fighters, as well as civilian technologies, such as the Internet and Siri voice-recognition system.

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

**SAGE Recommends: $146M**

Founded to bring art to the U.S. public, the NEA strives to educate the public through different forms of art media. Last year the NEA funded a dance series to bring awareness and start discussions about domestic violence.

Department of Education (DOEd) Institute of Education Sciences

**SAGE Recommends: $637M**

As the main source of scientifically based research for the department of education, funding from the IES supports research on advancing teaching and learning. Funding from DOEd resulted in better placement tests, ways to access proficiency in subjects, and education methodologies which creates a stronger education system.
Immigration Policy

Student Immigration Reform Will Keep World’s Best in the U.S.

Restrictive visa policies limit our ability to retain the level of high-skill workers and innovators that a global, high-tech economy demands. SAGE supports highly-skilled occupation and student visas for U.S. economic advancement and intellectual property retention. The export of American educated and often federally funded students is a wasted investment and hampers our economy.

- More than half of PhD’s in many STEM fields are awarded to international students.
- In 2013 the number of H1-B visa applications exceeded the yearly limit of 65,000 in a single week.
- Immigrant-funded venture-backed companies have a total market capitalization of $900 billion as of June 2013.¹
- In 2010 more than 40% of the Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants.²

Highly-skilled visa reform: Allow world’s brightest to fill and create American jobs

Highly-skilled temporary H-1B visas are heavily dependent on the business cycle and their cap should be adjusted to meet demand. On the other hand, employment-based (EB) visas offer permanent residency and provide a long term solution to knowledge retention. Employment-based immigrant visas should be the route of choice for international students by exempting them from numerical limits.

SAGE recommends:

- Non-immigrant visas:
  - Establish a moving cap for H-1B visas based on demand
  - Grant work permits to spouses of H-1B visa holders
- Employment-based immigrant visas:
  - Eliminate per country numerical limits
  - Reallocate unused visas since 1992
  - For students earning a master’s or higher degree from an accredited institution in the U.S., exempt these individuals from numerical limitations and admit them for permanent residence, as supported by the STAPLE Act H.R. 1227.
  - Extend conditional permanent resident status to immigrants with an advanced degree to broaden entrepreneurial opportunities, as included in the Startup Bill H.R. 714.

F-1 Visa Reform: Remove work restrictions and authorize dual intent

The F-1 visa is the primary visa for foreign, full-time students in the United States. To continue attracting the world’s best students in the face of rising tuition costs, it’s particularly important to allow

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¹ National Venture Capitalist Association. 2014.
international students to hold jobs to help support themselves and their families. In an effort to retain these students, it is also important to allow dual intent status so that they may apply for immigrant visas upon graduation.

SAGE recommends:
- Authorize dual intent for F-1 student visas
- Remove off-campus work restrictions for F-1 visa holders
- Authorize employment for spouses of F-1 visa holders (F-2 visa holders)
MISSION—“Dedicated to creating a community of student leaders from the preeminent public research universities in the United States that is committed to bettering their own student bodies and promoting educational access, quality, and opportunity nationally.”