Rackham Student Government
Board Meeting: June 5, 2013

Agenda

I. Call To Order
II. Approval of Agenda
III. Approval of Previous Minutes
   a. May 22, 2013
IV. Officer Reports
   a. Graduate Student Body President/Treasurer, Phil
      i. Budget Review Winter 2013
      ii. Budget Spring/Summer 2013
   b. Graduate Student Body Vice President, Kaitlin
V. Appointment of RSG Treasurer
VI. Committee Reports
   a. Legislative Affairs       d. COSAC/Student Life
   b. Academic Affairs         e. Budgetary
   c. Communications
VII. SAGE Update (Michael Benson)
     a. Letter regarding President’s Budget
VIII. Revamping of RSG Schedule—Fall
IX. RSG T-Shirts
X. Open Discussion
XI. Adjournment

Included in packet:
RSG Board Minutes May 22, 2013
Winter 2013 Budget Review (Budget, Expenses, Budgetary Committee Appropriations)
Committee Minutes (LAC, AAC, CC, SLC/COSAC, BC)
SAGE Newsletter
SAGE White Papers
SAGE Letter
RACKHAM STUDENT GOVERNMENT  
BOARD MEETING  
5/22/13  
RACKHAM GRADUATE BUILDING  
2ND FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM, NORTH ALCOVE  
7:06 P.M.

a. **CALL TO ORDER:** 7:06pm  
b. **Present:** Chris Tom, Kaitlin Flynn, Michael Benson, Phil Saccone, Brooke Horton, David Malewski, Julian Bahr, David Barton, Chuky Mbagwu, visitor Mike Hand, Alex Gutierrez, Ryan Roberts  
c. **Absent:**  
d. **Excused:** Ram Balachandran, Yiting Zhang  

II. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**  
a. Motion to approve the agenda by Chris and seconded by Michael. Approved unanimously.  

III. **APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES, 5/15/13**  
a. Update time and attendance to reflect reality. Motion to accept and approve by Chris and seconded by Chuky.  

IV. **OFFICER REPORTS**  
a. **President Phil Saccone.** Summer plans: Phil has been meeting with the folks at Rackham to plan co-sponsored events including the Fall Picnic, Tigers game, ice cream social, and a possible Fuller park pool day. The planning process will primarily be delegated to the student life committee. Treasurer application is still open!  
   i. **Executive Order: Creation of a Communications Committee.** This order included in your packet is from Phil and Kaitlin ordering the creation of a communications committee. Phil is interested in hearing feedback about the order. Michael asks what an Executive Order is and  
b. **Vice President Kaitlin Flynn.** Newsletter coming out soon, Kaitlin is about to talk a lot about committees, excited about working with the communications committee. Ram reminds us to include names of people that won the election prizes.  

V. **Committee Assignments, Priorities and Meeting schedule**  
a. **Kaitlin VP:** In charge of committees. Went over the list. If not satisfied, please bare with for the summer. Any concerns?  
   Tom: Asks about JCOM Is it still in effect?  
   Kaitlin we will address that later
Kaitlin: makes motion to approve slate seconded by chris. 
Slate is approved unanimously. 
Scheduling- the chairs will send out doodle poll to members. 
Phil: make sure you meet before the next meeting. 
Kaitlin: Plan an agenda for you committee and budget. Lists some suggestions. 
Budgets are due by the beginning of the next board meeting. 

Suggestions from the board: 
Barton: housing forum, SAGE priorities, public safety, Cedar Point 
Malewski: PILOTS, 401K reform, professional development 
Ryan: Website is big priority, increasing interactivity with funding model 
Chuky: Communications and website the most important priority, information on committees, Cedar Point trip, SAGE priorities 
Julian: Website, more interaction and engagement with div IV, federal issues 
Gutierrez: Grad Student Bill of Rights and the website 
Benson: website, GSBOB, secession activities—enhance and increase representation for graduate students at the U, continue to serve the students 
Chris Tom: website, reach out to other academic affairs bodies at the U including SACUA and CSG’s AAC. 
Ram: website, housing forum advertisement on the website in order to drive traffic, running club, improving the openness in academic affairs for student professor relationships—create a resolution to have 3 years of feedback available on Wolverine Access. 
Brooke: Grad Student Bill of Rights, particularly the enforcement piece, also the website. Establishing a relationship with SAPAC to give seminars on mentor/mentee sexual harassment and hosting as a Rackham event as there is less outreach to grad students in the STEM fields, where this harassment is at particularly high levels. Anonymous reporting system for issues with mentors through Rackham. 
Mike Hand: Cedar Point trip, closure on CSG secession issue, fellowship/money issues pamphlet 
Kaitlin: website, communications, career development/career fair

VI. Eugene Daneshvar, former representative
   a. What kind of content and functionality is needed? Recruit nonmembers to do some of the initial work. (this is a sidenote) 
   b. Eugene has come to resign as a representative. He has really enjoyed working with us and appreciates the effort that we put in. He would ask that we really think about what we are trying to do here, whether it be to make the experience better or the U better. Some things to consider are that a GSI has more help via GEO for protective issues than GSRAs. Eugene’s purpose was to even out that balance. We don’t have legal representation in our GSRA contracts and that leaves some students quite helpless. The gap is still there. But we are asking the U to give up power with the BOR. We have the rights to this power though. Phil accepts his resignation.
VII. **Committee Budgets**: please do them and submit them on time. Phil can make available what was requested last summer as well as documents for budget requests, etc.

VIII. **CSG Secession + JCOM update**: last semester there was a resolution to create a committee to investigate separation from Central Student Government in order to ensure graduate students are represented fully. A joint committee would include students from Medical, Law, Dental, etc graduate student organizations. The vote from last Fall has charged the board with exploring. Phil continues to talk about the issues. Kaitlin mentions that CSG gets $7.19 of graduate students’ money and RSG only gets $1.50. There are fairness issues with how this money is distributed and our funding model ends up being more pinched than we would like. Michael mentions the genesis of the issue was basically that undergraduates have no idea what it’s like to be a graduate student. There is an issue of representation here. Why should a student 4 years below you be your representative at the University level? Michael further explains the representation issue. Chris Tom mentions that it doesn’t make sense that there are two bodies representing graduate students as it dilutes the power. Michael mentions that the trend across the nation in Research I universities has been to separate graduate and undergraduate student governments/representation. Dave asks which schools are in support behind us. The Law School, the School of Public Health, the School of Social Work, the Medical school student council is supportive but has not yet taken a vote. Michael has spoken to prior leadership at the business school. The important thing is that this would not go to CSG but to the Reagent’s directly. Julian asks if the Reagents have taken a position yet. Phil says that they have not but it CSGs position is that they believe the Reagents would not be in favor. Chuky asks for the previous two attempts what the failure was. Michael mentions that they were

IX. **Revamping RSG Schedule—Fall- postponed until next meeting**

X. **SAGE Update—Michael Benson—postponed until next meeting**

XI. **Appointments**: with Eugene’s resignation we have an open seat in Division II. Phil would like to appoint Mike Hand who has been at the U for a number of years and held a number of leadership positions at the College of Engineering. Motion by Chris and seconded by Ram, it’s approved unanimously.

XII. **Open Discussion**: going to Arena after this for a social event.

XIII. **Adjournment**: Motion by Chris and seconded by Mike
I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Roster: Alex Tououse (AL), David Malewski (D1), David Barton (D2), Julian Bahar (D1), Kaitlin Flynn (VP), Michael Lang (D1), Michael Hand (D2), Phillip Sacone (PRES), Michael Benson (D2), Brooke Horton (D1), Ryan Roberts

a. Present: Representatives David Malewski, Julian Bahar, Michael Lang, Michael Hand, Brooke Horton, Former President Michael Benson, President Phil Sacone
b. Absent (excused): Kaitlin Flynn,
c. Absent (unexcused):

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Michael asked for amendments to the agenda. None were put forward. The agenda was approved.

IV. COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

Phil: Michael, as our president emeritus and chair of SAGE is a good fit to chair this committee. I have a lot to do and Michael has a lot of experience so I would like to appoint Michael as the co-chair of the committee. Per an action of the executive, President Benson has been appointed as co-chair of the committee.

Per the RSG Bylaws and committee precedent, Representatives Horton and Hand were added to the committee’s roll as voting members.

V. RECAP OF COMMITTEE’S ACTIVITIES

Michael asked the membership if they were familiar with SAGE and its activities. All but Ryan indicated that they had read the SAGE white papers. Michael then briefly detailed the committee’s work last year including hosting a successful election forum, the SAGE fall summit, and the recent SAGE Days on the Hill conference among other local accomplishments.

VI. DISCUSSION OF RSG BOARD GOALS AS THEY RELATE TO LAC

The committee discussed the Board’s goals.

VII. COMMITTEE LOGISTICS
a. **MEETING DATES / TIMES / LOCATIONS**

The committee voted to move its bi-weekly meeting times to 6:30pm on alternating Wednesdays and to move the meeting location to the Rackham Building’s 2nd floor West Study Hall’s South Alcove.

b. **SELECTION OF POLICY LIASONS**

The selection of three policy liaisons was postponed to the next committee meeting to allow members time to consider which position(s) to apply for.

   i. **LOCAL**
   ii. **STATE**
   iii. **FEDERAL**

c. **COMMITTEE SPRING / SUMMER BUDGET**

The committee discussed its plans for the spring/summer and determined that no budget would be necessary.

VIII. **LOCAL ISSUES – SPRING / SUMMER / FALL PLANS**

The committee started to discuss its plans for the fall semester including its planning work over the spring and summer. The following specific issues were raised:

1. Lease signing fora and ordinance
2. Conference Center Discussion (utility for students?)

IX. **FEDERAL ISSUES – SPRING / SUMMER / FALL PLANS**

SAGE’s current issues were discussed. The co-chair announced that he was creating a SAGE – wide committee in his capacity as SAGE’s chairperson and would be housing the committee as a sub-committee of the legislative affairs committee. The subcommittee will be chaired by President Saccone and will work to find, research, and present potential new issues for SAGE to consider. Additionally, the sub-committee will present potential issues to the legislative affairs committee to consider that are Michigan centric.

Additionally, the co-chair asked that each member select one - three areas to follow in Washington, D.C. and that he would be emailing the committee with the tools to accomplish this prior to the next meeting.

X. **PLAN FOR STATE ADVOCACY**

Members of the committee expressed a desire to be involved at the state level. As such the co-chair asked that each member select one – two policy areas to follow in Lansing and that he would be emailing the committee with the tools to
accomplish this prior to the next meeting.

XI. RSG BYLAWS
Will start the process next meeting. Will review why things are the way they are next time. Will solicit specific requests from committee chairs before the next meeting and will remind the Board that all are welcome to attend our meetings for this.

XII. OPEN DISCUSSION
Prior to adjourning the meeting, the co-chair asked all members present to:

1. Provide their thoughts on the committee’s first meeting as well as its direction for the semester.
2. Suggest areas of improvement.
3. Identify a favorite color.

The responses are provided below:

Brooke – Things are good. Looking forward to more group discussion. 401k issues. 

Mike Hand – Like these kind of behind the scenes things including the bylaws and the issues. I’d like to see a wider and broader impact at the state level. Blue.

David – Meeting went well. Plenty to discuss. Covered all of the issues I’m concerned about. Navy blue.

Dave – So far so good on the committee. From the perspective of a pharmacist, we have a tendency to deal with stuff at a state level and be almost myopic of the national issues. I’ve done some national stuff with the ___ managed care __. I’m looking forward to delving into this and getting a better idea. Blue.

Mike Lang – Second term on the committee. I love everything about this committee. Biggest challenge is trying not to do too much. I’d love to go into taxes and creating an info graphic for students. Perhaps in Student Life perhaps here. Favorite Color is Brown but I usually tell people its Caroline blue.

Julian – I like this committee so far. Interested to see the things that I don’t know much about. I come from a federal science focus. Looking forweard to seeing the resources to track issues. Also interested in taxes. Orange. Now blue.

Ryan – Like the committee. (Positive feedback) SAM (MAGPS conversation) UNC Blue

Phil – Committee is going great so far. Nothing additional that I’d like to see. Whatever people are passionate about run with it. Kaitlin and I thought that the Board level might want to focus on the Federal and local levels but if people are passionate about the state, lets go for it. Lavender

Michael – Go team. Red

XIII. ADJOURNMENT: 8:53 pm

Respectfully submitted by Michael Benson, Co-chair.
I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:08pm

II. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Members: Chris Tom, Michael Benson, Phil Saccone, Janakiraman Balachandran, Alex Gutierrez, Kaitlin Flynn, Brooke Horton, Ryan Robertson

Present: Chris Tom, Michael Benson, Phil Saccone, Janakiraman Balachandran, Alex Gutierrez, Kaitlin Flynn, Brooke Horton, Ryan Robertson

Excused:

Unexcused:

III. OUTSTANDING ACTION ITEMS

a. [Michael] Email Phil about Assistant Registrar contact information
b. [Phil] Email to someone about why course evaluation information is private
c. [Chris] Write to SACUA’s AAC and set up meeting
d. [Chris] Help edit Ram’s Resolution
e. [Phil] Set up meeting with Janet re: Bill of Rights and other Resolutions
f. [Michael] Get list (updated?) for SACUA committees that would like a graduate student on them

IV. CHAIR ELECTION

a. Chris is chaired unanimously
b. Meeting moved to 6:30pm @ typical RSG board room

V. PROJECTS AND GOALS

a. GSBOR pretty much out of committee
b. Course bank: committee passed. Next step to meet with John Godfrey (Assistant Dean Rackham) and Janet
c. Course evaluations: Meet with Janet, SACUA, and undergrads? Need to get Rackham to pay for tech updates.
   i. Ram suggests having reviews available for student body to allow for more informed course decisions. Michael Benson says we have access to information and have the power to release it ?
   ii. Phil interested in talking to person dealing with Rackham faculty matters regarding this issue. Michael suggests the Assistant Registrar
   iii. Inquire into why the information is considered private
   iv. Chris suggests an additional comment field for “public” on evaluations
v. Phil to look into other SAGE universities regarding their handling of the availability of this information

d. Sexual harassment:
   i. Brooke suggests online reporting system on Rackham website. Look at undergrad system if existing and look at other universities for this type of global (non-school specific) system
   ii. Ethics courses/information
   iii. Faculty conflict resolution regarding

e. AAC needs to talk to SACUA about conflict resolution.
f. SACUA asked us to determine which of their committees should have graduate student representation

VI. BUDGET
   a. Should be about $200 to cover costs of printing orientation materials (~$110 previously, but adding another page)

VII. OPEN DISCUSSION

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: 7:54pm

IX. APPENDIX
Resolution to make evaluations ‘semi-mandatory’

Whereas evaluations at the University of Michigan for Graduate Student Instructors (GSI) and faculty are completely voluntary on the students part, and

Whereas evaluation completion rate for paper evaluations used to be >90%¹, and

Whereas the current digital system has around a 30% completion rate², and

Whereas teaching evaluations for GSIs are a training tool for junior colleagues,³ and

Whereas teaching evaluations for professors plays a significant role in professional advancement within the University,⁴ and

Whereas a smaller sample size becomes less relevant for professional advancement and less useful as a training tool.

Whereas a system of mandatory evaluations would benefit both GSI, junior faculty, and the University as a whole, therefore

Be it resolved that a student who has not filled out the relevant evaluations for a class shall not be able to see their grades for said class within a period of not less than one (1) month from the end of the semester.

Be it resolved that immediately upon completion of the relevant evaluations, a student shall be able to see their grades.

Be it resolved that the President of the Rackham Student Body in conjunction with the RSG Academic Affairs Committee shall work with the Office of the Registrar to set these changes in place.

¹ In order to become a better teacher, and prepare for future leadership roles
² including tenure and salary adjustments,
Resolution to create a class-bank system

Whereas classes are a critical, mandatory component of the majority of graduate student education at the University, and

Whereas some upper-level classes are offered once every two or three years

Whereas these classes may prove to be advantageous for advancement

Whereas the current Rackham system for PhD candidates only allows for a single class to be taken free of charge per semester

Whereas a second class can be taken for a substantial fee to the student or the advisor

Whereas fellowships and training grants often require additional classes to be taken; these classes can negate the cost-benefits of candidacy and other training grants, therefore,

Be it resolved to convert the current Rackham system to a class-bank system in which graduate students are allowed (with their advisors permission) to take as many classes as desired, up until the class bank is depleted is met, at which point students are permitted to enroll or audit in one class per semester.

Be it resolved that this bank shall contain X classes/credits

Be it resolved that the President of the Rackham Student Government on behalf of the Rackham Student Body is instructed to work with the Office of the Registrar and Rackham Graduate School to implement these suggestions.
RESOLUTION TO EXPAND THE UNIVERSITY NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

WHEREAS, The Non-Discrimination Policy within the University of Michigan Standard Practice Guide\(^1\) exists to protect the diverse range of individuals employed by and attending the University from discrimination, harassment, and violence; AND

WHEREAS, the Non-Discrimination Policy states that the University “will not discriminate against any individual because of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status\(^5\);” AND

WHEREAS, “gender identity” is interpreted to refer to the self-identity of the individual\(^6\); “gender expression” is interpreted to the actions of an individual to realize their gender identity\(^7\); AND

WHEREAS, the American Psychological Association defines sexual orientation to be “an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions to men, women, or both sexes\(^8\);” AND

WHEREAS, sexual orientation refers to the nature of the person or persons that an individual is emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions; AND

WHEREAS, University protects the subject and the object of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions through its Non-Discrimination Policy; AND

WHEREAS, the Non-Discrimination Policy does not protect the actions between the subject and object that are the primary means to sexual and physical fulfillment; AND

WHEREAS, “sexual expression” would thus refer to the actions of an individual to realize their sexual identity; AND

WHEREAS, “marital status” is defined as “never married, married, widowed

\(^{1}\) Michigan Standard Practice Guide (sect. 201.35)
\(^{6}\) Jackie Simpson, Head of the Spectrum Center, adapted from personal communication on Feb 13\(^{th}\), 2012.
\(^{7}\) Dr. Charlie Glickman, Adult Sex Educator in San Francisco, adapted from personal communication March 31\(^{st}\), 2012.
and not remarried, divorced and not remarried, married but legally separated, de facto union9”; AND

WHEREAS, “marital status” does not protect a diverse range of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual relationships that can occur outside of, and coexist with, the institution of marriage; AND

WHEREAS, it is known that individuals can and have been discriminated against for their methods of sexual expression and non-marital relationship status10; AND

WHEREAS, without explicit protection from discrimination, there may be the threat of implicitly sanctioned discrimination; violence and related hate crimes can accompany the lack of explicit protection11

NOW ON BEHALF OF THE STUDENT BODY OF THE HORACE H. RACKHAM GRADUATE SCHOOL, BE IT RESOLVED, that the section 201.35 of the Standard Practice Guide of the University of Michigan be amended as follows (without emphasis):

“The University, in its employment and human resource policy and practices, will not discriminate against any individual because of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, relationship status, sex, sexual orientation, sexual expression, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status, except as allowed by the need for bona fide occupational qualification. Reasonable accommodation will also be provided to persons with disabilities, to disabled veterans, and to accommodate religious practices;” AND BE IT FINALLY

RESOLVED, that the President of the graduate student body is empowered and directed to work with the Administration of the University of Michigan to put into place policies that reflect the will and intent of this resolution.

AUTHOR

Christopher Tuck Mung Baker Tom
Representative (Division 1), Rackham Student Government

10 National Coalition for Sexual Freedom, Incident Response Report records
11 Rebecca Stotzer, PhD. Comparison of hate crime rates across protected and unprotected groups. Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. June 2007.
Co-chair, Academic Affairs Committee

ATTEST
By Signing below, I certify the this resolution was dispatched by the RSG Board under the rules as prescribed in section IX of the bylaws and that the vote count appearing at the top of this resolution is accurate.

____________________________________
Kaitlin Flynn
Vice President, Rackham Student Government

PRESIDENTIAL ACTION
I, Michael Benson, President of the Rackham Student Body, do hereby approve / veto this resolution on this the _______ day of _____, 2012.

____________________________________
Michael L. Benson
President, Rackham Graduate Student Body
I. **CALL TO ORDER:** 7:00 pm

   a. **Present:** Julian Bahr, Michael Benson, Kaitlin Flynn, Chris Tom

   b. **Absent:**

   c. **Excused:** Phil Saccone

II. **Website**
   - hire someone or do it in house? The committee agrees to do it in house but spread the load across multiple programmers
   - features? Michael suggests looking at peer institution student gov websites
     - What do we want?
       - **Features:**
         - comment box
         - more streamlined UI, nicer menus
         - reps and exec info
         - many users able to edit different things.
         - Coding meeting set up with MB, MH and KF. MB will draw up a template using skeleton from UW website.
       - CT: streamlining overall. User accessibility. More visual and minimal design, less text overall. More professional look like UW and Berkeley. Mostly UI tweaks more than anything.
   - common funding app-- good idea to at least provide some administrative info for the CFA team to keep working. theoretically it will be implemented for use in winter 2014 semester.

III. **T-shirts**
   - for board members and others. New board t-shirts. Pete's logo on the front, 'STAFF' or 'REP' or 'LASTNAME' on the back. Blue vs Gray. Bring up at board meeting? Vote on color.
   - crowdsourced design-- yes do this. $200/screen. Do this in July. Kaitlin will take care of work with UGP to get it printed.
   - st pattys- final run for people who wanted them in March. MB will take care of, no cost. let's ask people if they want more. $5 a pop. Advertise. Have ordering and advertising by June

IV. **Publication deadlines/format**

   **Newsletter- By June 12**
   - new editor? Juliannnnnnn wahooooo!!! Michael will teach Julian.
Social media- Kaitlin will keep up with it. Will be more powerful when we have more people interested in RSG. Could make more people admins.

List-serv issues- temporary fix for about a month, then a brand new list after that. MB has worked on it. We will have one computer in the RSG office that will be able to send out these things, and should have division-specific list-servs. Should be ready by August.

V. Natalie’s visit
   • will be at board meeting on the 19th
   • social cohesion between programs
   • how can rackham communicate better with the student body? we will be thinking about it. the big lists that come out monthly are a little cumbersome.

VI. Budget: $1000 for two runs of t-shirts and a new banner.

Events? no events.

VII. Open discussion/other social projects people want to work on

CT- reach out to other student governments, figure out what we have in common and what we don’t. Sharing of best practices with other student governments. CT will take the lead.

Next meeting June 24 at 7pm.

Adjourn 7:43pm
I. CALL TO ORDER: 6:03pm
   a. Present: Representatives Chuky Mbagwu, Michael Benson, Andrew Lang, Mike Hand, Yiting Zhang, Vice President Kaitlin Flynn
   b. Absent:
   c. Excused: President Phil Saccone

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

III. APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

IV. CHAIR’S REPORT

V. TOPIC 1
   - Benson gives a summary of SLC/COSAC committee duties.
   - Ice cream social on June 23rd.
   - Tigers game against White Sox on July 10th.
   - Kaitlin asks for responsibilities for ice cream social, Benson replies mainly advertising duties.
   - Tigers game needs chaperones -> Phil and Kaitlin will handle that.
   - Fall picnic at is typically a flagship event; RSG often requires attendance. Costs between $300-$400 for reserved Island Drive parking, then use a Blue Bus for 1-day limited shuttle service between Island Drive, Pierpont, and CCLittle. Time is 5-8pm, usually on a Friday (day of orientation).
   - Bring back possibility of Cedar Point trip, current unknown costs. Costs includes bus costs, block tickets at discounted rates. Last year Rackham did a trip itself, and cost was $45 for bus and tickets – it was subsidized. We want to aim for $40. Looking into potential food options so there is less need to buy expensive park food. Action item: Kaitlin will contact Natalie (at Rackham) and Michael will look into food options/alternatives.
- Proposed August date for Cedar Point trip

- Plan a bar night once a month

- Fuller Pool event potential July/August date, we get discounted rate of $3/person. RSG will pay for first N people who sign up.

- John Forrest has given interest in horse racing event. More details later

- Canoe/Kayaking Event, $11

- One community service event. Potentially look at tutoring services? Maybe do a street cleaning event.

- Potentially consider a Lions Game. Kaitlin will make calls and look into it.

- Nominated Phil for chair of SLC/COSAC. Michael motions, Chuky seconds.

- Open discussion: Group registration through RSG and our website. Having a working list of all grad groups allows us to better allocation of funds and space as well as help collaboration between groups, programs, etc. May help with CSG secession. CCI currently handles all grad student group registration.

- Yiting requests absence for next SLC/COSAC meeting. Away for a conference.

Events That We Want to Fund:
- Ice cream social
- Tigers game
- Fall Picnic (must)
- Cedar Point
- Monthly bar night
- Fuller Pool event
- Horse Racing
- River/Kayaking Event
- Community Service Event

Event Timeline:
June
- 20th (Thurs) – Happy hour event (Kaitlin planning)
  - budget-wise: ~$200 for drinks
- 23rd (Sunday) – Ice cream social (Phil has details)
  - $800 split cost of entire event
- 28th to 30th (wknd) – Canoe/Kayaking Event (Mike will get details)

July
- 10th (Wed) – Tigers Game
- budget: approx. $800 (up to $1200)
- 17th to 20th (FYI) – Ann Arbor Art Fair (non RSG)
- 20th/21st (Sat/Sun) – Cedar Point Trip
  - budget: approx. $800
- 30th (Mon) – Happy hour event (Kaitlin planning)

August
- 5K volunteer support (Andrew will get details)
- 17th (Sat) – Fuller Pool event
  - budget: $300? + Ice cream/food?
- 20th (Tues) – Cleaning/community service event
- 30th (Fri) – Fall Picnic
  - budget: massive shared budget with Rackham

VI. TOPIC 2

VII. TOPIC 3

VIII. OPEN DISCUSSION

IX. ADJOURNMENT at X:XXpm.
I. CALL TO ORDER:

a. **Present:** Yiting Zhang, Ryne Peterson, President Benson, Treasurer Saccone, Kaitlin Flynn, Matt Filter

b. **Absent:** Dan Trubman

c. **Excused:** GradWISE

**GradWISE**

Phil: This is a networking event for engineering students that will also feature a guest speaker. GradWISE is an organization that has approximately 150 members all of whom are graduate students. They anticipate 100 people at the event although they typically report an attendance between 40-70. GradWISE is requesting $500 to rent a space for the event.

In general I am very supportive of this application. I emailed the applicant to ask if they would consider holding the event at Rackham where we could reserve a room for free. I also asked for clarification on the "budget" question given the confusion we've had in the past. Please see her answers below. Bottom line-- they interpreted the budget question correctly, the numbers add up, and they gave a strong rationale for why the event is better held at the Gerald Ford Library.

I feel comfortable supporting up to the full amount. The event is well planned and seems like it would benefit the graduate student body. I am closing the debate on this finding request Friday April 19th at 5p. Please be prepared with a motion at that time.

Michael: I’ve carefully reviewed this request and would like to **move that the committee fully fund the requested $500** with the stipulation that we also advertise this event in the gazette. (While it is unlikely that folks will come up from Central Campus, we can try to entice them right?)

Yiting: This application looks good to me. Their north campus location choice explanation is clear. I would like to second the motion to fully support this.

Yes: Michael, Phil, Yiting, Kaitlin, Matt, and Ryne

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion carries for $500

**ADJOURNMENT** April 20, 2013, 12:00 am
RACKHAM STUDENT GOVERNMENT
Budgetary COMMITTEE
April 4, 2013
RACKHAM GRADUATE BUILDING
2ND FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM, NORTH ALCOVE
6:00 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER: 06:00pm
   a. Present: Yiting Zhang, Dan Trubman, Ryne Peterson, President Benson, Treasurer Saccone
   b. Absent:
   c. Excused: Flynn, Filter

Thai Students Association.
Those that were able to attend their presentation said it was well done. Presentation was well done. The primary issue raised was whether we could grant them the full amount even though they were charging for admission. It is difficult to assess how many of the participants would be graduate students. The total price tag seemed a bit high albeit for an elaborate show.
Motion for $500 by Michael, seconded by Ryne.
Yes: Michael, Phil, Ryne, Yiting, Dan
No: 0
Abstentions: 0
Motion carries for $500

AMS
Michael: What did we give them last year? ($200) Doesn’t seem that many graduate students. Could not find evidence that a majority of people attending will be graduate students. It was noted that the speaker could attract graduate students. The Committee decided to appropriate based on what AMS received from RSG last year.

Michael motions for $300, seconded by Dan
Yes: Phil, Michael, Yiting, Dan, Ryne
No: 0
Abstentions: 0
Motion carries for $300

**AWIS**

Good event, good amount of people. Organization is reliable and follows RSG protocol. The amount asked for is always reasonable. High amount of confidence in their proposal and event.

Michael motions to fund $58.00, seconded by Ryne

Yes: Michael, Ryne, Yiting, Phil, Dan

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion carries to fund $58.00

**Hustle and Grow**

Evaluated how much was appropriated for this event last year ($166). Around 50% graduate student participation. Request is almost entirely for food purchase. Committee sought to be consistent with last year's appropriation.

Motion by Ryne for $150, seconded by Michael.

Yes: Michael, Ryne, Dan, Phil, Yiting

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carries to fund $150.00

II. OPEN DISCUSSION

III. ADJOURNMENT at 6:35pm.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Budgetary Appropriations</strong></th>
<th><strong>Award</strong></th>
<th><strong>Paid</strong></th>
<th><strong>Forfeit</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWIS</td>
<td>$ 87.77</td>
<td>$ 87.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femmes</td>
<td>$ 400.00</td>
<td>$ 400.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWAP</td>
<td>$ 360.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 360.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGSAA</td>
<td>$ 140.00</td>
<td>$ 140.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPC</td>
<td>$ 700.00</td>
<td>$ 700.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWIS</td>
<td>$ 100.00</td>
<td>$ 100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BrainsRULE</td>
<td>$ 415.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 415.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOR</td>
<td>$ 415.00</td>
<td>$ 415.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLAGSO</td>
<td>$ 200.00</td>
<td>$ 200.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GradTONES</td>
<td>$ 200.00</td>
<td>$ 200.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSA</td>
<td>$ 700.00</td>
<td>$ 700.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPIC MACAY</td>
<td>$ 650.00</td>
<td>$ 650.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMS</td>
<td>$ 300.00</td>
<td>$ 300.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GradWISE</td>
<td>$ 500.00</td>
<td>$ 500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWIS</td>
<td>$ 59.00</td>
<td>$ 59.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSA</td>
<td>$ 500.00</td>
<td>$ 500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hustle and Flow*</td>
<td>$ 150.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Operating Budget** $ 6,500.00

**Remainder** $ 1,548.23

* H&F Deadline Fri June 7, 2013
## RSG Expenditures Winter 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Operating Budget</th>
<th>Itemized Expenditures</th>
<th>Total Expenditures</th>
<th>(+/-) Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Life Committee</strong></td>
<td>$2,580.00</td>
<td>$2,271.54</td>
<td>$308.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentine's Day</td>
<td>$23.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Patrick's Day</td>
<td>$516.18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March Madness</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Skating</td>
<td>$588.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolling with Rackham</td>
<td>$1,117.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COSAC</strong></td>
<td>$900.00</td>
<td>$649.13</td>
<td>$250.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>$33.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus to Detroit for clean up</td>
<td>$616.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Affairs</strong></td>
<td>$1,400.00</td>
<td>$986.40</td>
<td>$413.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch with the Deans</td>
<td>$986.40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budgetary</strong></td>
<td>$6,500.00</td>
<td>$4,951.77</td>
<td>$1,548.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Group Funding</td>
<td>$4,951.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications</strong></td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislative</strong></td>
<td>$3,900.00</td>
<td>$1,916.19</td>
<td>$1,983.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAGE</td>
<td>$1,916.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elections</strong></td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td>$260.00</td>
<td>$(10.00)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Incentives</td>
<td>$260.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Administrative</strong></td>
<td>$470.00</td>
<td>$236.66</td>
<td>$233.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>$166.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSL Certificate</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gala Committee</strong></td>
<td>$650.00</td>
<td>$420.00</td>
<td>$230.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room deposit (forfeit)</td>
<td>$120.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Jug Social (sub. for Gala)</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td>$16,250.00</td>
<td>$11,691.69</td>
<td>$11,691.69</td>
<td>$4,978.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# RSG Expenditures Winter 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Operating Budget</th>
<th>Itemized Expenditures</th>
<th>Total Expenditures</th>
<th>(+/-) Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Life Committee</strong></td>
<td>$2,580.00</td>
<td>$2,271.54</td>
<td>$308.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentine's Day</td>
<td>$23.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Patrick's Day</td>
<td>$516.18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March Madness</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Skating</td>
<td>$588.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolling with Rackham</td>
<td>$1,117.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COSAC</strong></td>
<td>$900.00</td>
<td>$649.13</td>
<td>$250.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>$33.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus to Detroit for clean up</td>
<td>$616.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Affairs</strong></td>
<td>$1,400.00</td>
<td>$986.40</td>
<td>$413.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch with the Deans</td>
<td></td>
<td>$986.40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budgetary</strong></td>
<td>$6,500.00</td>
<td>$4,951.77</td>
<td>$1,548.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Group Funding</td>
<td></td>
<td>$4,951.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications</strong></td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislative</strong></td>
<td>$3,900.00</td>
<td>$1,916.19</td>
<td>$1,983.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAGE</td>
<td>$1,916.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elections</strong></td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td>$260.00</td>
<td>$(10.00)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Incentives</td>
<td>$260.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Administrative</strong></td>
<td>$470.00</td>
<td>$236.66</td>
<td>$233.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>$166.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSL Certificate</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gala Committee</strong></td>
<td>$650.00</td>
<td>$420.00</td>
<td>$230.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room deposit (forfeit)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$120.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Jug Social (sub. for Gala)</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTALS** | $16,250.00 | $11,691.69 | $11,691.69 | $4,978.31
## RSG Budget Winter 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Life</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentine's Day (estimated)</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Patricks Day</td>
<td>$575.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March Madness</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Skating</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boiling with Rackham</td>
<td>$1,005.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$2,580.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COSAC</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation, food, and misc. for 2 events</td>
<td>$900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Affairs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSG Graduate Student Survey</td>
<td>$400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch with the Deans</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$1,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budgetary</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Group Funding</td>
<td>$6,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$6,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter Trivia Prizes</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational flyers</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislative</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Arbor Leasing Forums</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Education Advocacy in Lansing</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAGE Day on the Hill</td>
<td>$3,100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$3,900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elections</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting incentives (prizes)</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Discretionary</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Administration</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSL Certificate</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$470.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Account Balance</strong></td>
<td>$28,767.50*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requested Funds</td>
<td>$16,250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Reserve Funds</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses left from fall</td>
<td>$2,259.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unallocated Funds</td>
<td>$7,258.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Account balance reflects the amount of money on deposit as of 1/29/13 plus $11, 731.00 in student fees, $3,793.00 SOAS correction, and $100 deposit from AT (Fall summit)
The Sequester Will Stifle Innovation and Job Creation

The effects of the sequester are already being felt at many of the top federal agencies that fund graduate student research. NIH is planning on decreasing or eliminating 25% of their grants. The NSF will cut 1,600 research and education grants translating to 19,300 fewer student research hires and technical support personnel. NASA has suspended all public outreach and will cut research awards by 5%. If the sequester proceeds as planned, these cuts will have a detrimental effect on the productivity of graduate students and their professors over the next 9 years. The President's proposed FY2014 Budget eliminates the sequester and restores the funding of most federal agencies to their FY2012 levels. SAGE supports any legislation that maintains or increases federal funding to these agencies. At this critical time in our nation's economy, we must foster innovation and creativity at our preeminent research institutions. Federal funding to public universities through research grants is guaranteed to produce novel technologies and cures to diseases, which create new job opportunities for U.S. workers.
Controlling Graduate Student Debt & Taxation

Student loans are the single greatest debt by dollar amount in the United States, with 69.6% of graduate students holding loans with an average debt of $47,503. This debt is delaying the contribution of advanced degree recipients to the growth of our nation’s economy. Reforming current loan payment programs, bankruptcy discharge and tax policy will not only control the debt burden but also enable recent graduates to contribute to our national economy, sustaining our global competitiveness. By reviewing the current guidelines for Income Based Repayment (IBR), the “Pay as You Earn” program can be expanded to include more loans and get more students on structured loan repayment plan. Considering regional cost of living differences in IBR and improving education on the program’s benefits will make IBR a more pragmatic program for loan repayment. Furthermore, amending policy regarding bankruptcy discharge to include private student loans will allow current legislation to serve more struggling students. Finally, as the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 approaches, SAGE recommends applying the HEA’s definition for “Cost of Attendance” to current tax law which omits books, supplies, and housing from the definition of ‘Qualified Higher Education Expenses.”

Critical Visa Reform for U.S. Competitiveness

Current restrictive visa policies in the United States inhibit our ability to attract and retain the world’s best students, high-skill workers, and economic innovators. These individuals are vital for the nation to remain competitive in the global economy, with non-citizens responsible for an estimated 25% of new engineering and technology companies as well as 25% of all new patents in the U.S. It is in our best interest to incentivize these individuals to both come and stay in the U.S. by removing the barriers to entry. To achieve this, SAGE recommends reforming visas for highly-skilled foreign workers by implementing a moving cap based on industry demand for non-immigrant H-1B visas and exempting U.S. educated non-citizens from numerical limitations on employment based immigrant visas. These changes would ensure that the U.S. economy has access to the number of highly skilled individuals it requires while providing a route to permanent residency and a solution to long term knowledge retention. In addition, SAGE recommends reforming the F-1 student visa to allow for dual-intent such that students educated in the U.S. be able to apply for permanent residency. Finally, it is SAGE’s view that expediting visas and removing work restrictions for spouses of these critical individuals creates a more favorable environment for visa holders, thus encouraging them to remain in the U.S.

SAGE travels to Chapel Hill for Fall Coalition Meeting

As voted by the coalition during the spring Day on the Hill, SAGE will be holding the 2013 Fall Coalition Meeting at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Set to take place in October, the four day conference will allow the participating institutions to share best practices for leading their Graduate Student Associations as well as discussing national issues in graduate education. This is the first time SAGE has held its fall meeting at UNCCH.
The President’s Budget

The President's Budget eliminates the sequester for FY2014 and restores most federal agency's funding to their FY2012 levels. SAGE supports retaining or increasing federal funding for research agencies. The President's Budget also called to extend the Income Based Repayment program to all student loans, regardless of when they were dispersed. SAGE has suggested legislation regarding the extension of IBR in our White Papers. SAGE is concerned about the President’s proposal to tie the student loan interest rate to the Treasury rate for bonds. This proposal does not place a cap on these interest rates, which have been as high as 15.3% in 1981 and as low as 2% in 1941. SAGE recommends placing a cap on the interest rate that is equivalent to the current rates for subsidized or unsubsidized loans (3.4% or 6.8%).

Protecting Against Growing Student Debt

Bills H.R. 532, the Private Student Loan Bankruptcy Fairness Act of 2013, and S.114, the Fairness for Struggling Students Act of 2013, would extend bankruptcy forgiveness to include private student loans. SAGE has recommended legislation of this nature for a number of years to counteract the rising levels of student debt post graduation.

Managing Student Loan Repayment

Bill H.R. 1330, the Student Loan Fairness Act, was recently introduced and would cap the interest rate on federal and some private loans at 3.4%. It would also forgive federal loan debt after ten years, under a new 10/10 Loan Repayment Plan. SAGE has always been a strong supporter of initiatives to address the ever growing burden of student debt.

Comprehensive Immigration Reform Efforts

The bipartisan group of senators known as the ‘Gang of Eight’ has released its long awaited plan for comprehensive immigration reform. The bill, S. 744, attempts to address wide ranging immigration issues in the United States, including among other things: border security, pathways to legal residency for undocumented immigrants, and changes favoring work related and merit based visas. SAGE fully supports comprehensive immigration reform, and in particular, has advocated for a number of changes to both immigrant and non-immigrant visas for highly-skilled individuals, which have been included in the bill. Debates on the bill are currently ongoing and SAGE expects to release an official statement on the bill in coming weeks.

SAGE Alumni Spotlight: David Croom

David earned his Master of Public Policy from the Goldman School at the University of California Berkeley in 2012 and served two years as a SAGE delegate during his time there. He is currently an analyst at the nonprofit organization ACT in Washington D.C., where he specialized in education policy development. David remains active as an adviser to SAGE and his experience as a former congressional staffer and his policy background have proved invaluable to SAGE’s development.
April 12-16, 2013

WWW.SAGECOALITION.ORG
EBOARD@SAGECOALITION.ORG
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 fully supports ongoing efforts for comprehensive immigration reform, and believes that these students play a critical role in US economic growth as well as the retention and advancement of our intellectual property. SAGE believes that changes to our visa system should be enacted to lower the barriers to permanent residency and incentivize these 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
Stifle Job Creation and Economic Growth

Student Debt: A Growing Obstacle for Obtaining 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.\(^2\) This growing burden has a tangible effect on the number of students who apply to graduate school and the time it takes them to complete their degrees. 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 (IBR) rules to apply to all outstanding federal student loans, and improve the outreach and servicing of IBR so it is accessible and helpful to borrowers.
- Make Income Based Repayment installments regionally sensitive to the cost of living.
- Pass H.R. 532: Private Student Loan Bankruptcy Fairness Act of 2013 and S. 114: Fairness for Struggling Students Act of 2013, which extend bankruptcy discharge to private student loans.

‘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, and other education-related expenses. This definition determines the amount of student financial aid and higher education incentives, such as subsidized student loans and tax deductions, for which a student is eligible. In 1986, changes in tax law limited this definition disadvantages graduate students, 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.

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.

Background: Student Financial Burden is Overwhelming
Elimination of Federal Programs Add to Student Debt

Subsidized Student Loans. Effective July 2012 graduate students are no longer eligible for subsidized student loans. The elimination of the in-school and the after-graduation grace period subsidy has added to the overwhelming debt graduate students face. This loss has created a disincentive for prospective students to pursue advanced degrees.

---

\(^1\) The Project on Student Debt (2011). Student Debt and the Class of 2010. Washington, DC, The Institute for College Access and Success.

Graduate Student Aid is in Decline. Graduate students face cuts and elimination of funding in multiple need-based programs and a narrowing of benefits for those that do still exist. Indeed, the merit-based Javits Fellowship program (awarded to some of the highest achieving graduate students) has been suspended due to congressional cuts ($9.7 million), while awards for existing Javits Fellows will now be shared with the $31 million Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) fund.

Addressing Student Debt: Loan Forgiveness Programs

Income based repayment (IBR)³ is an important mechanism for graduate students to make student debt manageable. In 1994 Congress implemented a series of loan repayment options based on an individual’s income. These programs cap monthly payments on student loans and forgive remaining debt after the student has made a set number of payments. The monthly installment amount is a percentage of an individual’s “disposable income,” currently defined as the difference between Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) and 150% of the federal poverty line for the family size.

The Problem: IBR Programs Are Too Restrictive. The new IBR programs are an excellent first step at addressing the increasing debt of students, but do not help many graduate students or current borrowers. For instance, to be eligible for the current “Pay as You Earn” program, students must not hold student loans from before 2008 and must receive federal loans after 2011. Additionally, forgiven debt under IBR is treated as taxable income, resulting in a strenuous tax liability on individuals who have qualified for IBR precisely because they are unable to pay more.

In addition, the monthly payment amount under IBR does not account for the differences in cost of living faced at various regions of the country. Other federal programs use metrics, including the HUD Fair Market Housing Rate and the Department of Defense Basic Allowance for Housing, to account for regional cost of living adjustments in benefits. Students would greatly benefit if IBR allowed for regional sensitivity and defined disposable income to better represent the ability to repay student loans.

Approve the Expansion of new Income Based Repayment Rules for Everyone. President Obama’s 2014 budget proposes the expansion of the “Pay as you Earn” rules to apply to all student federal loan holders. The SAGE recommendation encourages this change.

Addressing Affordability: Qualified Higher Education Expenses

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. The SAGE recommendation makes the definition of “qualified higher education expenses” consistent across all forms of federal education assistance.

Taxation of Fellowships and Scholarships. Education expenses paid with fellowship and scholarship monies can be deducted from gross income. The current definition excluding room and board reduces the benefit by 1 to 1.5 months’ worth of scholarship funds. Notably, education awards do not take this tax burden into account.

Lifetime Learning Credit. The Lifetime Learning Credit is equal to 20% of the taxpayer’s out-of-pocket education related expenses up to a maximum of $10,000 in expenses (that is, $2,000 in benefits). However, because of the narrow “qualified higher education expenses” definition, most graduate students do not qualify.

³ 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

The U.S. economy depends on groundbreaking research conducted at top research universities to remain a world leader in innovative technology development and application. With the federal budget cuts under the sequester, our situation is critical; these short-term savings will have long-term consequences on job development, economic growth, and the U.S. university. To remain globally competitive, Congress should expand federal funding of graduate student research, which produces cures to diseases, new technology, and a more powerful workforce.

### SAGE SUGGESTED FUNDING LEVELS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>FY 2012</th>
<th>FY 2013 w/ sequester</th>
<th>SAGE recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSF R&amp;RA</td>
<td>$5.7 billion</td>
<td>$5.5 billion</td>
<td>$6.2 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH</td>
<td>$30 billion</td>
<td>$28.6 billion</td>
<td>$31 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NASA SMD</td>
<td>$5 billion</td>
<td>$4.75 billion</td>
<td>$5 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEH</td>
<td>$146 million</td>
<td>$139 million</td>
<td>$154 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOE (OoS)</td>
<td>$4.9 billion</td>
<td>$4.2 billion</td>
<td>$5 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOAA</td>
<td>$651 million</td>
<td>$625 million</td>
<td>$733 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DARPA</td>
<td>$2.1 billion</td>
<td>$2.5 billion</td>
<td>$2.9 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**National Science Foundation (NSF)**

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. At the estimated sequester funding levels, the NSF would fund 1,600 fewer research and education grants. This translates to 19,300 fewer student research positions and technical support personnel than FY 2012.

**SAGE Recommends:** Fund NSF at the President’s FY2014 $6.2 billion budget request level.

**National Institutes of Health (NIH)**

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. At the estimated sequester funding levels, 25% of grants are decreased or eliminated.

**SAGE Recommends:** Fund NIH at the President’s FY2014 $31 billion budget request level.

**National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Science Mission Directorate**

The NASA Science Mission Directorate outlines specific, unanswered questions concerning the Earth, Solar System and Universe that can 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 other navigation devices. At the estimated sequester funding levels, NASA is suspending all public outreach, releasing 5% fewer University research awards and at least 10% fewer missions.

---

1 AAAS sequester estimates from FY 2013 apply percentage cuts provided by the Office of Management and Budget’s March 1 report to Congress.
**SAGE Recommends: Fund Science Mission Directorate at the President’s FY2014 $5.0 billion budget.**

### National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)

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. The preservation and interpretation of this and other primary historical documents allow us to pass on cornerstones of our nation’s past to future generations.

**SAGE Recommends: Fund NEH at the President’s FY2014 $154 million budget.**

### Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science

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. At the estimated sequester funding levels, the DOE is canceling the FastForward initiative for an energy efficient computing project; this termination will threaten our energy independence and national security.

**SAGE Recommends: Fund DOE Office of Science at the President’s FY2014 $5.0 billion budget request level.**

### National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

NOAA conducts crucial science 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. At the estimated sequester funding levels, 2,500 jobs will be furloughed and 2,700 jobs will remain unfilled further increasing unemployment. In addition these cuts also decrease NOAA flight time for hurricane reconnaissance and coastal surveying, thus prolonging disaster-reaction time and decreasing the likelihood for successful victim rescue.

**SAGE Recommends: Fund NOAA Office at the President’s FY2014 $733 million budget request level.**

### Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)

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. At the estimated sequester funding levels, DARPA funded university projects will be decreased by 10%, including research for advancing military communication efforts.

**SAGE Recommends: Fund DARPA at the President’s FY2014 $2.9 billion budget request.**
Student Immigration Reform Will Keep World’s Best in U.S.

As the U.S. economy globalizes and high tech industries continue to grow, restrictive visa policies limit our ability to retain the level of high-skill workers and innovators that such an economy demands. SAGE supports comprehensive immigration reform, and believes that changes to high skill occupation and student visas are critical for U.S. economic advancement and intellectual property retention. The export of some of the best and brightest American educated and often federally funded students is a wasted investment and hampers our economy and our standing as global leaders.

- More than half of Ph.D.s in many STEM fields are awarded to foreign students
- In 2013 the number of H1-B visa applications exceeded the yearly limit of 65,000 in a single week
- An estimated 25% of all U.S. patent applications are submitted by non-citizens
- Between 1995 and 2005 25% of new engineering and technology companies in the U.S. were founded by immigrants, many of whom were educated in the U.S.

I. Highly-Skilled Visa Reform: Allow World’s Brightest to Fill and Create American Jobs

High skill 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:
Include the following provisions in any comprehensive visa reform:

- **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:**
  - Exempt students earning a master’s or higher degree from an accredited institution in a STEM field in the U.S. from numerical limitation

II. 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 U.S. To continue attracting the world’s best students in the face of rising tuition costs, it’s particularly important to allow 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."
To: <RECIPIENTS>
Re: President Obama’s FY14 budget

On April 10, President Obama revealed his administration’s budget proposal for fiscal year 2014. The budget includes many initiatives relating to graduate academic and professional education including sustained funding for our nation’s research program, a plan to tie federal education loan interest rates to a market based rate, and improvements to the Income Based Repayment program. On the whole, the Student Advocates for Graduate Education (SAGE) are supportive of the President’s proposal particular as it relates to research funding. It is our hope that the Congress will take the President’s proposed funding levels and enact them into law in a timely manner.

In addition to providing for research funding, the President’s FY14 budget proposal seeks to modify the federal educational loan interest rates, which are currently set at 3.4% for subsidized loans and 6.8% for unsubsidized loans. The proposal would tie these rates to a market-based rate as determined by the Department of the Treasury. In the short term, this proposal would serve to keep interest rates comparable to today’s values. However, as the economy improves, the market-based rate will increase thus raising student loan interest rates. SAGE supports maintaining low interest rates, especially for unsubsidized student loans as graduate students are now ineligible to receive subsidized loans. Should the President’s plan be implemented, the potential exists to significantly raise these rates above today’s levels. As such, SAGE supports including a cap on both the year-to-year growth of the federal student loan interest rates as well as a ceiling for all categories of loan interest rates.

SAGE strongly supports the President’s proposed modifications to the Income Based Repayment (IBR) program. In particular, its expansion to include all federal student loans and removing the taxability of a forgiven loan will bring the IBR
program in line with the Teach and Public Service loan forgiveness programs. As the Congress considers this proposal, it is our hope that a component of regional sensitivity to the purchasing power of a dollar due to the local cost of living is also applied to IBR.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Benson
Chairperson
Student Advocates for Graduate Education
chairperson@sagecoalition.org