



Fall 2016 GPSA Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 2016 October 11

Location: UNM Student Union Building, Sandia Room

Presiding Committee Member: Travis Scholten

Present Committee Members: Travis Scholten, Joe Raborn (1100-1200), Brian Mackie-Mason, Hahn Nguyen, Nina Cooper (1000-1045)

Absent Committee Members: Isaac Olaoye

1 Opening

Meeting called to Order at 0959

Roll call of committee members was taken.

Agenda Approval: Agenda is approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Rep Scholten informed the committee the minutes from 2016/09/13 contain an error regarding the FC recommended spending amount, and asks that the amount be modified to \$5062. The FC unanimously approved the revision to the minutes.

2 Preliminary Business

2.1 Media and Gallery

No media and gallery.

2.2 Chair Reports

No Chair reports.

2.3 Budget Revisions

No budget revisions were discussed at this time.

3 Business Items

The only business items at this meeting were the consideration of appropriations requests, detailed below.

3.1 FA 2016-007A through FA 2016-007I - Graduate and Professional Student Association

The GPSA had submitted a block of requests to be heard by the FC, which were taken up concurrently. The GPSA President and Chief of Staff were present to discuss the requests.

According to the Chief of Staff, the requests reflected reasonable amounts for spending on specific line items, in accordance with historical yearly spending. Further, the amounts reflect an attempt on the part of the GPSA to be good stewards of the members' money. The GPSA provided the FC with 2015-2016 balance sheets to show the actual amounts spent on various line items.

Discussion ensued regarding the line items "Other" which were used to pay for Chair stipends. According to the Chief of Staff, the FY 2016-2017 Budget did not allocate adequate funding for Chair stipends, and the purpose of making these requests was to make up the balance of the difference. The FC asked the GPSA to clarify exactly what their target was for stipends; according to the Chief of Staff, each Chair was to be paid \$400 per semester, for a total of \$800 per year. Some discussion took place regarding the stipends for the Programs and Student Support and Advocacy Chairs, as the budget indicated those positions would be funded over the summer as well. According to the GPSA, there is no need at this time to give retroactive funding for those Chairs.

As such, the GPSA asked the FC to make up the difference between \$800 total, per Chair, per year, and the amount allocated to the Chairs in the FY 2016-2017 budget.

Rep Nguyen moved to approve request 7B (GPSA Council) as requested. Seconded by Rep Cooper. Motion carried unanimously.

Rep Cooper moved to lift the FC Standing Rules, seconded by Rep Mackie-Mason. Motion carried unanimously.

Rep Cooper moved to approve requests 7C through 7I (GPSA Elections Committee, GPSA Finance Committee, GPSA Grants Committee, GPSA Lobby Committee, GPSA Programs Committee, GPSA Student Support and Advocacy Committee, and GPSA Court of Review) as requested. Seconded by Rep Mackie-Mason. Motion carried unanimously.

Standing Rules were reinstated.

In considering Request 7A (GPSA General Government), the FC expressed concern regarding some of the line items. Line item 8, “Other”, was of particular interest, as the requested amount was \$4,000. Although the GPSA does incur so-called “general operating expenses”, the President and Chief of Staff indicated the GPSA could get by for now with less money in that particular line item. The GPSA remarked that, in accordance with the general climate of austerity due to impending budget cuts, the request tried to avoid unnecessary spending.

Rep Nguyen moved to lift the FC Standing Rules, seconded by Rep Cooper. Motion carried unanimously.

Rep Nguyen moved to approve Request 7A, with the following modifications:

1. Line item 3 (“Food and Refreshments”) reduced from \$3,300 to \$1500.
2. Line item 8 (“Other”) reduced from \$4,000 to \$2,000.

Motion seconded by Rep Cooper, and approved unanimously.

Standing Rules were reinstated.

Rep Scholten informed the FC, the President, and the Chief of Staff that, upon further inspection of the Budget, the stipend for the LSC Chair was funded only for the Fall 2016 semester, and the stipend for the Vice-Chair was unfunded for the entirety of the year. Rep Nguyen encouraged Rep Scholten to work with the GPSA Council Chair to submit an appropriation request in the amount of the balance not budgeted (\$400 for the LSC Chair, and \$800 for the Vice-Chair.)

Further, Rep Nguyen asked Rep Scholten to work with the FC Chair in determining the feasibility of paying some amount to those who participate in hearings. Rep Nguyen cited the long hours and workload as justification for doing so. Rep Scholten indicated he would be willing to investigate this issue, and will get back to the FC.

3.2 FA 008 - Indian Student Association

The Indian Student Association presented a request to help fund its annual Diwali event. This event is very important to Indian graduate students, and GPSA’s help would be of great value. The event is open to all GPSA members. The FC inquired as to the number of graduate students in the organization, and was told that almost 70% of the members are graduate students.

The FC expressed some concerns regarding line item 3, “Other”, as it would be used to pay for an auditorium rental. The FC was told that an auditorium in the Continuing Education building was particulaly good for this event, as it could accommodate almost 270 people, and the building’s administrators allow external lighting and sound crews.

Rep Mackie-Mason motioned to approve line items 1, 3, and 4 (“Food and Refreshments”, “Other”, and “Copying Services”) as requested, and to reduce line item 2 (“Advertising”) from \$100 to the Standing Rule limit of \$50. Rep Cooper seconded, and was approved unanimously.

Rep Mackie-Mason motioned to recategorize line item 5 (“Professional Services”) as “Honorary”, and to fund it at the Standing Rule limit of \$250. Rep Nguyen seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Rep Mackie-Mason motioned to deny funding to line item 6 (“Educational Supplies”), citing the FC’s concern that the use of those funds would not be to purchase supplies of an educational nature, but instead to purchase materials necessary for promoting the event. Rep Nguyen seconded; motion carried unanimously.

3.3 FA 009 - Student Action Network

No representatives from this organization were in attendance; the FC tabled their request until its next meeting. Some discussion ensued regarding whether the group was aware of GPSA travel grants, as well as whether the group was aware of the FC Standing Rule limits regarding travel.

Rep Scholten offered to follow up with the representatives from the group.

3.4 FA 010 - Sports Administration Student Association

No representatives from this organization were in attendance; the FC tabled their request until its next meeting. Some discussion ensued regarding whether the group was aware of GPSA travel grants, as well as whether the group was aware of the FC Standing Rule limits regarding travel. Further, it appeared that some of the points of contact on the form were UNM staff members, which raised concerns regarding whether this request was really being made by graduate students.

Rep Scholten offered to follow up with the representatives from the group.

3.5 FA 011 - Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) UNM Student Chapter

The EERI UNM Student Chapter presented a request to help fund some events and purchase materials for the organization. The organization is new to campus, and is looking to grow its graduate student enrollment.

The FC expressed concern regarding line items 3 through 5, citing the Standing Rule requirements that any supplies purchased must remain on UNM’s campus. After some discussion

with the representative from the group, it was determined the EERI does in fact have a locker on campus, and was willing to provide documentation to the FC to that effect.

Rep Mackie-Mason motioned to approve line items 1 and 2 as requested; Rep Raborn seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Rep Mackie-Mason motioned to approve line items 3 through 5, pending the receipt of documentation confirming the group has an on-campus storage space; Rep Nguyen seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4 Discussion Items

The FC discussed several topics, detailed below. As discussion items are for discussion only, no official committee action was required.

4.1 Appropriation Guideline Document Updates

Rep Scholten informed the committee that the current version of a document which helps groups understand the appropriations process is woefully out of date. In its place, Rep Scholten proposed a new document, which had been distributed to FC members via email. The FC agreed with Rep Scholten that a new document was needed; Rep Scholten requested FC members to provide any feedback they might have. After receiving feedback, Rep Scholten said he would request that the GPSA Office Manager post the new document.

4.2 Appropriations Request Form Updates

Rep Scholten brought the FC up to speed regarding developments in making a new version of the Appropriations Request Form. Changes were needed in part because the old form wrongly indicated some types of funding requests (large-scale capital improvements) would be considered by the FC. This led to a miscommunication regarding request FA 2016 - 006 (Student Association of Geography and Environmental Studies), which the FC did not wish to repeat.

The old form required organizations to provide a phone number; citing privacy concerns, that particular piece of information should no longer be requested. Further, the old form contained a sheet with funding limits - a sheet which had not been modified after the approval of the FA 2016 Standing Rules. As such, the FC decided to simply remove that sheet from the Form, and refer groups to the Standing Rules for that information.

Rep Scholten was to follow up with the FC for any additional feedback, and to send it to the GPSA Office Manger for upload to the Appropriations webpage by 2016/10/18.

4.3 FC Website Updates

In previous email discussions, the FC determined it was necessary to revamp and revise its webpages on the GPSA's site. Rep Scholten had made some initial efforts in that regard, and asked the FC for their support and feedback. Rep Raborn volunteered to help manage the pages, in part by learning how to use the Cascade system (which powers the pages). That way, Rep Raborn could update the content, instead of the GPSA Office Manager. The FC agreed this would be a more efficient way of making the requisite changes.

Rep Mackie-Mason had circulated a document showing some changes, including making updates to the PB funds and Budgets page. The FC agreed to continue looking at updates.

5 Closing

5.1 Chair Comments and Future Meetings

The next FC meeting was scheduled for 2016/11/08, Election Day. As such, the FC agreed to move the meeting date to 2016/11/07, possibly in the Zimmerman Library Graduate Student Commons.

5.2 Committee Member Comments

Rep Mackie-Mason inquired whether the FC felt it was meeting the obligation of funding student groups, as well as the GPSA. Rep Scholten asked whether there were any kind of transparency reports which the FC should produce to help answer such questions.

5.3 Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1157.

6 Appropriations Summary

At this meeting, a total of \$22099 was requested, and spending in the amount of \$14258 was recommended by the Finance Committee. From correspondence with SGAO, the most recent estimate of the General Fund's balance through 2017/06/30 is \$60626.89. This estimate was computed as of 2016/10/12.