

MEMORANDUM

To: Zoila Alvarez-Hernández, GPSA Legislative Council Chair

From: Travis Scholten, GPSA Finance Committee Vice-Chair

Subject: Appropriations Request SP_2017-004

Date: 2017 February 18

In the appropriations summary information provided to Council for its February meeting, the rationale for request SP_2017-004, from the Spanish and Portuguese Graduate Student Association (SPGSA), states

“No representative from the group was in attendance, so the FC voted to table the request until its next meeting.

In reviewing my correspondence with the SPGSA, I realized I had in fact failed to send them a copy of the agenda for the Finance Committee’s meeting. The sending of the agenda more or less constitutes the official notification of the time they were to show up and speak to their request. As such, the reason for their absence is simple - they were not informed as to when they needed to be in attendance.

In light of this, I would ask that Council take up this request at its meeting, notwithstanding the Finance Committee’s tabling of it at its meeting. Our Constitution establishes Council as the authority on making decisions regarding appropriations requests¹; the Finance Committee serves as a recommending body² to help facilitate the business of Council. As such, I do not think there is a question as to whether Council has the authority to consider this request, without a recommendation from the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee informally discussed the request some, and there was consensus that at least part of the request should be funded. This is especially true in the case of the line items they requested for line items 9 and 10, “Travel” and “Per Diem”. These line items are in accordance with our Standing Rules; further, the kind of travel the SPGSA seeks to cover with this request is consistent with the policy developed by the Finance Committee in Fall 2016. (Namely, travel should be used to help groups develop leadership skills for its officers, or to bring back useful knowledge to the group.) As the Finance Committee (and subsequently, Council) had voted to deny them travel funding in their request FA_2016-007 on those policy grounds³, it would behoove us to approve those line items in SP_2017-004.

Regarding the other line items, line item 1, “Advertising”, is being requested at our Standing Rule limits, and historically, we have funded that line item. I will admit there is an issue to be resolved regarding line item 6, “Food and Refreshments”, as the Finance Committee’s Standing Rules cap funding at \$300, and the request is seeking \$500.

Admittedly, I do not like having committed this oversight, and I will take ownership of that fact. To then require the SGPSA to wait until the April Council meeting to receive an official approval strikes me as unjust to them, as the error was not theirs. I ask that Council take action on this request, as it sees fit.

¹GPSA Constitution, III.1.C.4

²GPSA Bylaws, V.1.2.a

³The kind of travel requested was more appropriately funded through a travel grant through our Grants Committee.