

DARTMOUTH

Graduate Student Council

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April GSC General Body Meeting Notes

3rd April 2023

Topic 1. Standard Funding Requests

Members voted to approve two standard funding requests: one for providing prizes for the 3-Minute Thesis (3MT) competition, and the other for tabling at the Unwind Your Mind event by the Student Life Committee and CARE. Since Guarini hosted a poster session competition this year during Graduate Student Appreciation week, they did not offer funding for the 3MT Competition prizes as they did last year. It was noted that the large prize money amounts of last year appeared to be a substantial motivating factor for mass participation in the 3MT Competition.

Topic 2. Changes to Bylaws

Members voted to approve changes to the bylaws that close a loophole in proxy selection for the general body meetings. Previously, the bylaws did not formally state whether or not representatives on the GSC can proxy for one another, but it was presumed. The changes ratified at this meeting codifies in the bylaws that proxies may not be another current member of the GSC.

Topic 3. Proposal for new MEM Representative Scheme

Members voted to reject a proposal for a new MEM representative scheme as it stood. Since MEM students graduate in December and General Body Representative elections are in October, there are roughly twice as many MEM students in the fall term than in the remaining terms. This creates a discrepancy between the number of representatives MEM is allotted for the GSC (1 for every 25 students in a department) in the fall and the rest of the year. The rejected proposal aimed to alleviate this issue by mimicking the structure of the MCB representatives, which is divided into 1st year and 2+ year representatives. However, the tenure of a 2nd year MEM representative would be too short, given the timeline (October to December). An alternative would be to recalculate the MEM representative allotment after December, and then have the extra representatives share a seat with someone else to bring the number back down. We are open to more ideas on solving this problem.

Topic 4. Proposal for new Executive Board Position: Inter-House Graduate Liaison

Members voted to approve the establishment of a new Executive Board position, the Inter-House Graduate Liaison (IHGL), who is responsible for managing graduate student involvement with the House System.

Topic 5. Housing Updates

There are no new updates regarding housing. MEM students appear to be disproportionately impacted by the leasing terms offered by SOJ.

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Topic 6. Response to Anonymous Submission

Members discussed an anonymous submission made to the GSC voicing concerns about the Graduate Organized Laborers of Dartmouth (GOLD). The submission detailed a sense of concern surrounding the amount of information disseminated about unionization, suggesting a lack of transparency from GOLD, and the presence of a heavy bias either in favor of or against unionization in most of the communication from GOLD and the Dartmouth administration. Additionally, the submission sought to ask the GSC and/or ombudsperson to provide “unbiased” information about the potential disadvantages/challenges of unionization. Members brought up the point that the GSC represents all students, even those who may not want unionization. However, the GSC has already released two statements of support for GOLD, and releasing any negative information about unionization at this time could come across as hypocritical and ultimately be harmful to the unionizing effort. Tracey Brant, the ombudsperson, did provide Irma with some links to articles that list potential downsides of unionization. However, the ombuds office determined that it would be a conflict of interest for them to release any official communications about unionization. Members discussed nuanced approaches to addressing the information concerns such as asking questions to GOLD on other people’s behalf in the case of people being scared, putting together an infographic on how bargaining works, releasing a statement clarifying that union certification is not a magic wand nor a pandora’s box, etc. Ultimately, members voted to reject releasing a pros and cons of unionization list.

Topic 7. General Announcements

The GSC will contribute \$1,000 worth of \$25 gift cards to the food shelf each term. Half of the gift cards will be for the Co-op, and the other half for Price Chopper or Hannafords. The food shelf coordinator will distribute an even amount of gift cards per week so that the supply lasts the whole term (10 weeks). Students may acquire a gift card by emailing the food shelf coordinator (Dominique). The gift card will then appear in the student’s Hinman box or can be picked up in-person at Health Services. It could be worthwhile for the GSC to conduct a survey on food insecurity, or ask GOLD if they have already done one. Additionally, it would be good to add a resource page in the student handbook and GSC website, as well as advertise in the Circular. President Irma Vlasac asked about implementing an Advance Transit or Dartmouth Commuter stop at Centerra for students living at SOJ because of a lack of sidewalk (and therefore lack of safety) from SOJ to Centerra. However, transportation denied the request citing their own safety concerns. Transportation will implement a stop to the Hanover Co-op. It was also announced that the GSC calendar can host any events, not just GSC sponsored ones.

Topic 8. Open Forum

Cross-referencing the list of currently enrolled students, there appears to be 64 first year MEM students, and 52 second year MEM students (who all presumably graduated in December). Therefore, MEM currently has twice as many reps (4) as they should. This is an open problem.