

GPSA Minutes of Meeting  
2019-2021

**August 27, 2019**

In attendance: Connor Hill, Jordan Hardy, Sophia Theodossiyou, Stephen Fox, Martyna Lucaszewics, Stephanie Haag, Abrar Sindi, Kenny Bangudu, Louie Land, Anup Tuladhar

Connor Hill called the meeting to order at 8:00am

Connor Hill made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Sophia Theodossiyou seconded the motion. The motion to approve the last minutes was passed unanimously.

Connor Hill made a motion to install Stephen Fox as the 2019-2020 GPSA Secretary of Affairs; replacing Louie Land. Jordan Hardy seconded the motion. The motion for Stephen Fox to serve as Secretary of Affairs was passed unanimously. The GPSA thanks Louie Land for his past service to the council, and continued service in a variety of informal, but very important roles.

Connor Hill discussed a project to update department admin email addresses. Our current list is not organized, and there is some concerns that GPSA emails will not reach their intended targets. We don't want to disturb admin assistants in every department as we verify names and addresses. Jordan Hardy will make a spreadsheet by department to organize the names and email addresses.

Jordan Hardy shared that we have received 3 applications for new GPSA council members from currently unrepresented colleges. Connor Hill set a deadline for September 20, 2019 to receive new applications for council members, which should provide enough time for the GPSA to review and respond. Connor Hill instructed Stephen Fox to link the Council Application from the home page of the website. It was later discovered that updates of the travel and publishing award applications must be made, as the current apps reflect a previous GPSA structure that no longer exists. We are considering having 2 council members for each college in order to better reflect a diversity of views. It is daunting for a single council member to reflect the ideas and viewpoints of multiple departments. Sophia Theodossiyou suggested that for this year, we remain focused on council members who want to serve, in order to prevent attrition and to maximize productivity. The newly re-written constitution says we "...must..." actively recruit from each college. It may be necessary to amend the constitution further to establish elections, rather than have GPSA members and department heads solely responsible to fill positions.

Connor Hill suggested that we create a "Special Initiatives Committee" that would work on innovative programs benefitting graduate students. One such idea is the development of a new health insurance package; providing comprehensive medical, vision, and dental to graduate students of UI as a group. Stephen Fox and Connor Hill have been discussing options to implement a new health program, and Stephen Fox is currently working with Blue Cross of Idaho to receive a quote. Connor Hill made a motion to create the new committee. Sophia Theodossiyou seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The following GPSA

members have volunteered to be on the committee: Connor Hill, Stephen Fox, Jordan Hardy, Abrar Sindi, Louie Land, Kenny Bangudu, & Anup Tuladhar.

The council discussed some limitations of health insurance plans which are critical for international students.

Stephanie Haag updated the council on GPSA Coffee Hour. She has a key for storage in IRIC, and in response to some feedback, will purchase pitchers for water. Juice will also be offered. Connor Hill will assist Stephanie with setting up the 8/30/2019 Coffee Hour.

New website feedback:

- 1) Better description of archives and \$Award files for both pages.
- 2) Ad on home page to recruit new council members.
- 3) Place picture/bio in order of office

Next GPSA meeting to be held on 9/11/2019, 8:30am at IRIC

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00am

Submitted by: Stephen Fox

## **September 24, 2019**

In attendance: Connor Hill, Jordan Hardy, Abrar Sindi, Kenny Bangudu, Martyna Lukaszewics, Anup Tuladhar, Stephanie Haag, Sophia Theodossiou

No approval of minutes from last meeting

Meeting called to order at 10:03am

Council member appointments:

We have 2 applicants for GPSA council: 1 from COE (Seth Rose), Holly Choy (Food science) was a member of GPSA at WSU. Received an award for leader in science. We already have reps from food science, but we are hoping to recruit 2 members from each college. There is another candidate who has not obtained enough signatures. We are planning to invite candidates for in person interviews at our next GPSA meeting as part of their appointment process (Mark Rud). All 3 applicants will be invited to the next meeting. Connor Hill has additional prospects to invite who emailed him over the summer.

Kenny B: Safety and Loss control committee USLCC was held. Election of new chair and vice chair for the school year. Anna Plane (sp). A breakdown of the workman's compensation paid in 2018 was reviewed. Cases for injury claims made by workers and faculty. Average claims for injuries are approximately \$5000. Traction devices are currently available to staff, but not students. It was suggested to have a rep attend coffee hour to distribute traction devices for students.

Sophia T: Travel Awards - all applications were funded. GPSA members should inform their constituents about the publishing awards. GPSA will share Sophia's travel award email. TEGA award was discussed \$1500 for presentation

Connor: Update from faculty senate. Need Jordan to send GSO application for English students. A vote will be held today...a budget shortfall, trying to reduce costs through getting rid of adult eligible benefits. UI has its own health insurance plan covering "other adult benefits." There are currently 28 people that use the other adult benefits; 5 faculty and 23 staff members. Benefits Advisory Board met and determined UI would no longer be covering the 28 people. Faculty/Staff handbook explicitly offers OEA benefits, so board has no authority to remove them. Voting today to determine if the faculty will retain this part of the handbook or remove it. President Green will accept the findings of the faculty senate. Eventually we have to move to the state plan (TBD). Faculty is currently in support of keeping the benefits and absorbing the cost. Staff (23 members) are paid less, and less certain they want to keep the benefits. Connor feels he should abstain from voting. The council agrees that he should. Connor was put on the ISA space allocation advisory board. Commons is now renamed. All renaming requests now go through ISA, and GPSA is now represented.

Jordan: Ph.D. students are currently allowed to take up to 45 credits of research, including masters level research, but it won't necessarily count toward your degree. They want to make it so you can't use as much research credit toward your degree and will be taking content classes. Some departments are more research based than others, so there is disagreement on how to proceed with new standards. Stephanie suggested that each department; already having their own criteria, should be observed for each degree. Proposed changes would impose a maximum number of research units, so graduates are assured to have taken adequate content courses in their curricula.

Next meeting will be held Tuesday at 8am (10/8)

Meeting is adjourned at 11:00

Submitted by: Stephen Fox

## **October 8, 2019**

In attendance: Connor Hill, Jordan Hardy, Stephanie Haag, Stephen Fox, Sophia Theodossiou, Martyna Lukaszewicz, Anup Tuladhar, Abrar Sindi

Meeting called to order at 8:00am

Vote to approve minutes of last meeting: Connor Hill made a motion to approve last minutes, Martyna Lukaszewicz seconded. The council voted, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Jordan: There are no GPSA council applicants present to meet us. Jordan will meet with interested applicants and notify the council of the time. Halle Choi (Food Science), Seth Rose

(College of Education), Allison Ellingson (Engineering) Mark Rud (Art & Architecture). We need CoB, C&R representatives. Connor received and replied to an email from a C&R admin, wondering who the rep was. The admin distributed the GPSA application within the department. CoB and C&R departments will be targeted for next round of GPSA applications. Jordan put in a request to use IRIC 105 for the rest of the semester (meetings). We may have to use upstairs conference, and one week has all rooms occupied, but otherwise, we'll meet in IRIC. November 5<sup>th</sup> is unavailable.

Executive report: CH action items for the new senators. Set up time for applicants meeting. We will join if possible and then vote by email as a group. GPSA council will receive apps by email to review. There was discussion over the application and the need to obtain signatures. It was decided that we would continue with the app procedures and requirements as-is. Mark Rud needs 3 more signatures and has not completed the app for a few weeks. Email applicants to inform them of deadline. Faculty Senate voted to retain EOA benefits - will pay 30 more annually to keep adult benefits coverage. We may still switch to state health plan, but for now the benefits will remain unchanged. ISUB Board: Commons changed to Student Building. Developing structure for allocating space in the new ISUB building. Overall, this project should be beneficial for students. Unsure of how grad students will use this board. Stephen Fox suggested creating a graduate student lounge in ISUB. We will work on an application for a lounge. Connor Hill will get clarification from Grad council meeting on units to graduate and issues itemized from last meeting.

Part-time student eligibility for awards: they don't pay student fees, so PT students do not contribute to the pool of travel and publishing award funds. Many of those PT students are either finishing up or slowly completing a degree due to work schedules. We do not have enough in the budget to include PT students who don't pay into the fund.

Connor Hill has replied to several emails who didn't understand new GPSA structure. He suggests an infographic be created to illustrate the GPSA, all committees, and the responsibilities for our GPSA positions. We should use the month of October to complete the council, inform all constituents about how GPSA works and functions. In March, we need to hold an election for the next round of council members. The infographic could be added to the new GPSA website. Before we attempt to take on large projects, we should be certain of our complete council and "house" issues are handled.

Website: Changes to site layout. Meet with Connor to determine changes that will improve flow. Need GPSA application included. Sophia Theodossiou has additional documents to upload. Will send them to Stephen Fox.

Stephanie Haag: Needs someone to cover November 12 meeting for (Student Media Board). Hiring for an Argonaut editor. We need a quorum for that meeting and purpose. 4:45-6:00pm meetings are typical. Stephanie Haag will verify meeting time by next meeting. Abrar and Sophia are available to attend. Stephanie Haag will forward them meeting information. Jordan Hardy can also attend if necessary. We had a football ticket fiasco. 100 tickets total for 3 games, not just homecoming, so tickets are gone. We will write a thank you note for those who provided

tickets to GPSA. Our next meeting, we will discuss activities in conjunction with coffee hour. Socials cost a lot of money...eliminate them. Do something during normal hours...breakfast on campus, e.g. instead of socials. Cater more to what students want or need. Council agrees. Martyna Lukaszewicz suggested Hunga Dunga socials. We do not pay for that. HD offers discount.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52

Minutes Submitted by: Stephen Fox

## **October 22, 2019**

In attendance: Connor Hill, Jordan Hardy, Stephanie Haag, Stephen Fox, Sophia Theodossiou, Anup Tuladhar, Abrar Sindi, Kenny Bangudu, Halle Choi, Seth Rose

Meeting called to order at 8:00am

Approve minutes of 10/22 meeting: Sophia made a motion to approve 10/22 minutes. Stephanie seconded. Vote unanimous; motion to approve 10/22 minutes passes.

Executive Report - Connor

Met with President Green for presidential student advisory group. The new president is considerably busy with budgeting challenges at UI. They discussed GPSA insurance policy. Currently, SHIP is with United Health Student Services. Green suggested Blue Cross and didn't know about United Health. WUI scholarship is important to maintain. No results to report from ISUB board meeting. There is a draft of the parental leave policy heading into legal counsel. When approved, it will be presented to faculty senate for approval. GOGS may start asking alumni for a pool of donations to support parental leave. This should be up for a vote by Spring semester. CH was approached by a grad student (chemistry department); suggesting it would be nice to distribute basic points discussed at GPSA meetings and tasks we have completed. Stephen will complete that task.

Restructuring TEGA Awards - Sophia

Kate Strum (COGS) sent an email to use GPSA funds to award grad students equipment grants. The GPSA believes it should be the responsibility of specific departments to fund their students for equipment. Exorbitant costs of equipment could also very quickly diminish our available funds. Stephanie indicated that there is a problem on campus of communicating university assets. The engineering department is attempting to remedy that situation through providing inventories of available equipment, sharing equipment with trained students, etc. The concerns over untrained students using expensive equipment are well founded, but supervision and/or training would mitigate that issue. A survey sent to all departments may provide insights into what equipment is lacking and what equipment might be available to share in all the departments. Sophie will start by drafting a simple survey for students only to determine what exactly is needed in terms of equipment. TEGA restructuring issue will be tabled until the next meeting.

We will propose removing signatures required for approval and allow the committee to make determination for that.

#### Programming Update - Stephanie

Student media board meeting next week. We need a volunteer from GPSA council to attend in Stephanie's place. Stephanie wants to produce a survey to inquire with students as to what we could be providing to students; what is valuable and wanted (e.g., sports tickets, events, etc.). If we are using student fee money, it should reflect items/events with the most perceived value. CH: How are we hosting a survey? Qualtrics is available for UI (we have a license) for online surveys. Seth will produce survey from data provided. Coffee hours have been well attended and appear to be very successful. ([uidaho.qualtrics.com](http://uidaho.qualtrics.com))

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 am

Submitted by: Stephen Fox

#### **November 5, 2019**

In attendance: Connor Hill, Jordan Hardy, Sophia Theodossiou, Stephanie Haag, Stephen Fox, Martyna Lukaszewicz, Anup Tuladhar, Allison Ellingson, Halle Choi, Abrar Sindi, Mark Rud

Meeting called to order at 8:04am

Approval of 10/22/2019 Minutes

Sophia T. MM approve, Stephanie H. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote unanimous

Approval in of New Councilmember Mark Rud

Connor H. MM to approve Mark Rud as a GPSA rep, Stephanie H. 2<sup>nd</sup>, vote unanimous

Online Survey - Connor/Stephanie

Connor H and Stephanie H met to design survey. Questions regarding type, price, and availability for graduate housing are posed. Mark Rud currently lives in grad apartments; suggested an open-ended question eliciting feedback from current residents on current conditions and price.

GPSA Forum 1 - Connor/Stephanie

Thursday (1/23) at 5:00pm in IRIC. This is the first of its type of outreach to graduate students. We are hoping to connect with graduate students, face to face, to hear opinions on wants and needs for their program(s) and UI student life in general. While we are confident there will be frequent mentions of funding needs, we hope to also determine specific other ways to enrich and improve grad student life and the quality of overall experience.

Next GPSA funding deadline is March 15 – Sophia

Meeting Friday at 10am to review applications with Jan 15 closing date. E&P 4<sup>th</sup> floor for meeting.

GPSA Website redesign/Health Insurance – Stephen Fox

New site is under construction and will incorporate the elements and features as determined through feedback of our current site, and design meetings with council members. Once the site is ready to launch, it will be perused and thoroughly scrutinized in beta before we switch from our current host/design. Stephen estimates the new site to be ready by mid-semester. Health insurance using the NAGPS carrier remains a possibility, but the NAGPS has not returned phone calls. GPSA has been informed that the SHIP policy is currently rated, including the graduate students, and that our separation from SHIP will likely result in a price increase for UI undergrads. GPSA recognizes the importance of a smooth transition and will work in coordination with UI to minimize any economic or administrative problems. GPSA will continue to pursue outside options to provide an improved policy with added benefits for a lower cost.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 am

Submitted by: Stephen Fox

**January 21, 2020**

In attendance: Connor Hill, Jordan Hardy, Stephanie Haag, Stephen Fox, Martyna Lukaszewicz, Kenny Bangudu, Anup Tuladhar, Halle Choi, Abrar Sindi, Mark Rud

Meeting called to order at 8:30am

Approval of 1/21/2020 Meeting's Minutes

Abrar Sindi made a motion to approve minutes, Anup 2<sup>nd</sup> motion, unanimously approved

Review forum discussion – Connor/Stephanie

The first of it's kind, Connor was pleasantly surprised to have ~25 students attend the forum in IRIC. Issues discussed were: Housing conditions vis a vis amenities and local rent amounts, methods of connecting graduate students as roommates (GPSA website bulletin board), lack of cohesion in campus community regarding equipment availability. Grad student lounge idea was very well received.

Go over survey results/discuss interest in potential events/follow up actions – Connor/Stephanie

Results were used to inform the discussion of the R1 research working group. The majority of respondents to the survey indicated a lack of funding being the most prohibitive factor for grad school completion. Top 3 results from survey: 1) Funding 2) Personal conflicts 3) Ineffective mentorship. Stephanie wants to plan for a spring outdoor GPSA event with BBQ. The survey queried what types of events students would like to see, in addition to the coffee hour.

R1/Research working group update - Connor

Meeting determined that UI does not have a high enough graduate rate of PhD's to qualify for R1 designation. There will be a second meeting to examine how grad student life can be enhanced and improved. Dean of COGS acknowledges the need for TA positions to generate new research

ISUB space proposal for Graduate Student Lounge – Stephen Fox/Connor Hill

Steve, Kenny, Abrar, Connor Special topics committee. Connor is recusing himself from writing the proposal because he is on the ISUB committee. Steve, Kenny, and Abrar will compose the written application.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25am

Submitted by: Stephen Fox

Special Motion: Stephen Fox via email

Date: 3/15/2020

Hello all,

I would like to make a motion to designate \$5000 from GPSA funds for emergency student provisions: food, meds, copays, etc. It is conceivable that local businesses will be considerably impacted by measures to prevent COVID-19 transmission. By extension, this would include reduced work hours and wages. It would be prudent to create a plan to provide some support for our community.

Stephen Fox | University of Idaho

Program | M.A. Anthropology

Graduate Teaching Assistant | Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Secretary of Affairs | Graduate and Professional Student Association

Response(s) to motion: via email

3/15/2020

Subject: Re: Emergency resources

I agree with you, but I think 10,000 is better. Students will not have money to eat. This also will help reduce crime during crisis. We are one family and we need to help each other.

Thank you,

Abrar Sindi

3/15/2020

\$10,000 is a terrific idea. Are you then seconding my motion, Abrar?

Stephen Fox | University of Idaho  
Program | M.A. Anthropology  
Graduate Teaching Assistant | Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
Secretary of Affairs | Graduate and Professional Student Association

3/15/2020

On Sun, Mar 15, 2020 at 12:13 PM Sindi Abrar wrote:

Yes, I agree

Thank you,

Abrar Sindi

\*\*\*Special GPSA Meeting Via Zoom\*\*\*

March 17, 2020

Meeting was called to order at 9:00am

In Attendance: Connor Hill, Stephen Fox, Abrar Hindi, Stephanie Haag, Kenny Bangudu, Anup Tuladhar, Halle Choi, Mark Rud, Sophia Theodossiou

Stephen Fox reiterated his amended motion to allocate \$10,000 for graduate students from GPSA funds for COVID-19 relief. Abrar Sindi seconded the motion. A vote was taken. Unanimous acceptance. Connor Hill and Stephanie Haag will contact administration to resolve any tax or income conflicts associated with providing relief funds.