

University of Pittsburgh Faculty Senate  
Student Admissions, Aid, and Affairs Committee  
October 19, 3:00 PM  
Minutes  
Called to order 3:00pm

Attendance:

**Elected Members:**

Natasha Baker, Dental Medicine  
Barbara Dewhirst, co-chair, School of Nursing  
Nancy Glynn, co-chair, SPH  
Thottala Jayaraman, Dental Medicine  
Erin Mathia, HSRS  
Chenits Pettigrew, Medicine  
Clare Russell, Dietrich School, Department of English  
Susan Skledar, School of Pharmacy

**Student Representatives:**

Ryan Young, SGB  
Claire Dunning, GPSG

**Staff Council:**

Tasha Peacock, Institute of Politics

**Pro-tem:**

Ron Odoko, Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

**Chancellor's Liaisons:**

Kenyon Bonner, Vice Provost for Student Affairs  
Amanda Godley, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies  
Marc Harding, Vice Provost for Enrollment  
Stan O'Loughlin, General Counsel

**Senate Appointments:**

Robin Kear, President, Faculty Senate

**Guests:**

Shannon Wells, University Communications

Meeting was called to order by Nancy Glynn, co chair.

1) Approval of September 2023 minutes: approved as read: Sue Skledar and Ryan Young

## 2) Report of priorities from Ryan Young: President Student Government Board

### Board priorities:

- Further ongoing efforts to eliminate sexual misconduct, support survivors, and advocate for improved Title IX and student conduct policy.
- Work to refresh SGB through the student government board future planning task force.
  - Enhance and promote new services for student organizations.
  - Advocate for the needs of students with disabilities through the disability resources adhoc committee
  - Uplift the voices of students with disabilities through the disability resources ad hoc committee.
  - Improve off campus living for students through renters first taskforce.
- We're also working to refresh SGB through our future planning task force. So, this is a an ad hoc task force looking to kind of revitalize a couple of key components of SGB
- Enhance and promote new services for student organizations.
- Build connections amongst communities of color through the Students of Color in Solidarity Ad-Hoc Committee
- Work with student health to better connect students with wellness resources.
- Create a Democracy Week program to celebrate civic engagement in elections.
- This was not an inclusive list! The SGB is doing great things. See their webpage for more details.
- Question was asked regarding Student activity fees used to support organizations and their programming.
  - SGB received \$900,000 to distribute.
  - They are receiving twice the number of requests as in the past so the board is having to reassess their philosophy regarding distribution, so they don't overspend, but are equitable.
- [Home | Student Government Board \(pitt.edu\)](#)

## 3) Report on 2023/24 priorities from Claire Dunning, Executive Administrator for GPSG:

- Goal/mission: improve communication between graduate students and the university. To achieve this they
  - Assembly board meetings
  - Provost meetings
  - Create committees and select interested students to represent.
- Represent Graduate students on University-wide committees.
- Advocate for graduate students at the University, State, and National level.
- Provide services to graduate students.
- Newest taskforce: Health Insurance Task Force

Services: social events, travel grants, advocacy grants, supplemental funding, opportunities to serve on university wide committees:

Health insurance task force

Stipends: confusion around new changes  
Communications  
Programming  
And more

Current hot topics: Health Insurance and Stipends

Past events: coffee hour with free head shots and parfait bar; Pirates Game

Future events: with SGB:

- yoga session: free mats and mental health awareness
- Happy hour,
- Center for creativity,
- November coffee hour,
- volunteer activities,
- prom 2.0

How do you advertise:

- Grad students should sign up for monthly newsletter to know what's happening.
- Encourage students to sign up for GPSG.

[Home | University of Pittsburgh Graduate & Professional Student Government \(pittgpsg.com\)](http://pittgpsg.com)

Travel grants: why is \$ given after the event rather than prior to?

- Ryan states that the SGA also gives travel grants. This is to make sure students actually go to the conference. Travel grants up to \$400.
- A lot of discussion regarding this issue.
- Dr. Godley would like to work on this with the Graduate Association. (Claire)
  - So, I think this is a perfect issue for us to work on together and make some recommendations to the university for certain types of travel policies that apply specifically to students.
  - And I think it'd be helpful to hear if, when you talk to other graduate student governments at other institutions, how they handle this issue.
- Jay asked how they could increase their numbers.
  - The VP of communication is increasing their social media presence.
  - Trying to get their newsletter out to more people.

Suggestion made to reach out to dept heads to assist with getting information out. **(see link above)**

Chenitis: how well do the professional schools participate?

- Considering a survey to go out to the students asking about what is wanted from the organization. Many of them are career oriented.

Robin: Student emergency fund; Robin thought there was one, it is for grad and undergrad. In addition to medical hardship assistance fund. See links below:

<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/dean/student-emergency-assistance-fund/>

Medical Hardship Assistance Fund: <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/dean/health-insurance-medical-hardship-assistance-fund/>

4) No report from UPPA or

5) New Business: Nancy voiced heightened concerns across Pittsburgh college campuses; she heard from Jewish/Israeli students feeling scared, difficult time concentrating. Expects that Muslim/Palestinian students feel similarly.

Kenyon: Messages sent out to our Jewish students, along with resources on campus, both chancellor messages included resources and support for any students who are challenged by the events. Many Muslim students struggling as well.

Currently no specific or credible threats to any groups on campus, this does not mean that individual student are not being singled out.

Robin: Be sure to care for all; Call for funding for?

Natasha Baker: Focus on kindness to community for everyone. Bring everyone together. A march or rally of some kind; that we are PITT, we are individuals, but we are also PITT, we are a community.

Kenyon: A great idea, but feels the community is not yet ready for that. Described it as a grief process and that many are still “angry” and trying to figure things out, and how they feel. The university is hoping that when things calm down a bit, we can have this gathering.

<https://yearof.pitt.edu/discourse-dialogue/about>

Future meetings:

November: Marc Harding: present on admission numbers with Dr. Godley

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Dewhirst PhD, RN, CNL, CHSE

Co-Chair SAAA