

October 22, 2008 COGS General Assembly Mtg 5:30-7:30 Saint Paul Student Center 202

5:46 Geoff Hart calls meeting to order (or tries to)

5:47 Moves to move Cam Gordon's presentation to when he arrives.

5:48 Approves minutes from previous meeting

5:48 Workshop Update

- Boyd Cothran reported that the grad school panel for undergrads they were successful

- Geoff Hart reported that the Degree Completion Workshops have been extremely successful with 80 seats out of 120 already filled

- Eden Kaiser reported that this year's NAGPA Conference is being held here at the University of Minnesota. COGS is hosting a panel on publications and Ms. Kaiser invites everyone to attend on November 1.

5:51 Caroline Hilk reported on the COGS Survey.

Ms. Hilk reported that the survey was conducted last spring. It was a census so it was sent to all graduate students. There were 2,000 students from 133 degree programs. Ms. Hilk reports that this is about 20% response and that the sampling was fairly representative of demographics across graduate school though a slightly greater response from PhDs and from older students. Ms. Hilk then reported on graduate students' preferences for post-graduation employment. Regarding Assistantship, 60% of graduate students reported that they were offered financial support when they first began attending their current program. She reported that among those surveyed, 43% reported working more hours per week than their current appointment. Regarding Advising, Ms. Hilk reported that 28% of graduate students reported communicating with their advisors once a semester or less. 37% of students reported communicating with their advisors once a week or more. Ms. Hilk reports that these numbers vary greatly by P&R councils. Regarding Travel Support, Ms. Hilk reported that 52% of students reported receiving no travel funding at all and the lack of travel funds has prevented 28% from attending a conference. Finally, Ms. Hilk reported that the results of the survey will be broken down by P&R councils. A 65-70 page report will be made available on the COGS website along with a Press Release.

Ms. Hilk also indicated that there was a minimum for breaking down by department.

6:00 – Cam Gordon (Minneapolis City Council Member)

Mr. Gordon indicated that he represents the area of the city including the University Campus; that he was the only Green Party candidate on the City Council. He then spoke to the GA about his commitment to sustainability (food, water, LED certification) and

decision-making and community communication (Department of Neighborhood and Community Communication). Mr. Gordon indicated that he has fought for social justice in the Twin Cities. He notes that unemployment rates in the city have been greater than in the suburbs, particularly desperate along racial lines. Finally, he notes the importance of peace as part of his campaigning. For people between then ages of 18-24, he indicates that homicide is the number one cause of death in the Twin Cities. Wants to further develop committees to figure out how to prevent homicide and bring peace to the Twin Cities.

Tim ____ asks about the lack of communication between the University and City.

Mr. Gordon says that they have created a University-City Alliance in an attempt to build Town and Gown Relations. This came about as a result of the stadium. He indicates that they did an impact report on the effects of the stadium. They received \$750,000 as part of a pilot project to build relations. He indicates that the Central Corridor Project has brought the two together as well. Mr. Gordon notes that on the upper level things are getting better but not so much on the community level.

Jeff ____ asked if there were any plans to expand light rail.

Mr. Gordon spoke about the Central Corridor Project, its stops and location. He indicated that it is almost a “done-deal.” Mr. Gordon notes that there have been some streetcar studies in the cities. He says that the next major development might be heading Southwest. He indicates that more transit is coming.

Elissa asked about the Washington Foot-Bridge closure. Why have they closed them down and why has there been no construction?

Jeff Hart indicated that the university spoke to GAPSA. Carol Power said that the university has announced that it will be open by April 1.

Mr. Gordon says that he hasn't heard the latest and that he wished he had.

David ____ indicated that what concerns him is the lack of communication.

Mr. Gordon said that he is actually concerned that the bridge might not be completed by April 1. He notes that communicating this with elected offices is one way to help.

Roquel____ indicates that the University should provide alterative maps for getting around.

A question was asked about “Ranked Choice Voting” and whether or not that would influence the Presidential election. Mr. Gordon indicates that this is only a city voting system and it is designed to allow more candidates to advance to the general election. He says that it has been used in other cities like San Francisco.

Adam Zeilinger mentions that COGS has launched a Sustainability Committee. Mr. Gordon indicates that they have published a sustainability report.

Mr. Gordon asked: “What is COGS?” He was informed that the body he was addressing was COGS. Finally, Mr. Gordon mentioned his opposition to housing discrimination and indicated that he received significant opposition from community members but says that he is still concerned with it and will continue to fight for it. He asked if individuals have any stories to share.

6:34 Vladymir Gidzak reported back on the state residence status

At our previous meeting, it was asked if a student could become a resident of the state of Minnesota. Mr. Gidzak reported that there was a form. He said that a link is included on the form and will be one of the COGS website. The form is pretty straightforward. It was asked if simply registering to vote was sufficient. It was indicated by a representative that she had applied and been denied on the basis that she was a Full Time Student.

Kimi Johnson says that in order to be considered a resident you have to work for a year. A representative asks if there is a benefit on the part of the University for keeping the number of residential graduate students low.

It is asked if international students can apply for residency status. Mr. Gidzak indicates that if you have a green card, yes.

David says that the University needs to be more clear about the requirements for becoming a resident.

It is indicated that other people get residency with even less commitment.

6:46 Geoff Hart reports on Legal Coverage/ Distance Learning initiative

He indicates that he spoke with Dean Green and will continue to work on getting a buy-in option for graduate students. Distance learning initiative: we are forming a working group so if you are interested please report.

Boyd Cothran reported on the Travel Fund Campaign

6:49 Matt Kaplan gives an update on committees

Mr. Kaplan reports University wide committee opportunities. He indicates one of the most important committee that didn't get filled was the University Dining Service. He

mentions the Fair Trade Coffee Resolution from last year and discussed why it failed. Asks for people interested in the remaining unfilled committees to contact him. Mr. Kaplan then reported on COGS Sustainability Committee and asked for people with resolution ideas to contact him and share their views. He notes that COGS Sustainability Committee has secured two seats on the University wide Sustainability Committee.

6:56 Resolutions for Discussion

Matt Kaplan presented the Green Roofs Wherever Possible Draft Resolution. Geoff Hart then asked for comments on the resolution. A question is asked about the negative effects of Cold Weather on Green Roofs. Mr. Kaplan reports that Green Roofs have been tested and proven in our climate and points to the Downtown Library as evidence. A question is asked about implementation. Mr. Kaplan indicates that the “Wherever possible” clause attempts to address this issue.

A question is asked about the new science buildings and whether or not this would influence them. Carol Power indicates that those buildings have already been designed. Mr. Kaplan admits that the timing of this resolution is not optimal with the budget crisis but that it would still be a good idea to help generate discussion.

Amy Hazel asks if some language could be added about the potential for recovery of cost of implementation and upkeep through savings in energy. Libby Plowman suggests that the “wherever possible” language be removed as it tends to undermine the objectives of the resolution. She suggests that creating a hierarchy of action would be helpful – what do we want to see first?

7:06 Matt Kaplan presented the Improvement of University Technology in Large Meeting Areas to Minimize Paper Distribution resolution. He indicates that the resolution came out of a GAPSA meeting in which an enormous amount of paper was used. Mr. Kaplan provided some information regarding the amount of energy used to produce paper, print it etc. He also presented some information regarding the amount of energy used to run a computer. Mr. Kaplan then suggested that we need to investigate recycling of computers.

It is asked why do we want to buy a lot more computers, why don't we just provide more plugs for people to use their laptops? Mr. Kaplan indicated that that would be a good idea but that it was also addressing those who don't have computers. A representative suggests that paper can do things that a computer cannot – take notes, bring it home etc. Mr. Kaplan said that the resolution contains language about emailing documents ahead of time but the real concern is that overhead projections limits individual use. David says that he is concerned with the idea that we are replacing something useful with fancy technology. Geoff Hart indicates that all the meetings in Coffman could be held this way.

Libby Plowman suggests that we should probably start with the level of COGS. Mr. Kaplan indicates that we don't have the funds to implement this but does appreciate the comment. Another representative expressed his doubt that we could implement this in ten years and suggests that technology might solve this problem in a decade. Mr. Kaplan agrees but he also notes that there must be a middle ground between extremely paper-heavy meetings and futuristic paper-free meetings. Finally, another representative indicates that most students have laptops and wonders why the University would invest in something that would be obsolete in a few years. Mr. Kaplan indicates that obsolete is a vague term and that the basic functions required to replace paper are unlikely to become obsolete anytime soon. Mr. Kaplan asked again for suggestions for future resolutions

7:27 Geoff Hart made a plug for Facebook and asked folks to register with COGS' facebook.

7:30 Geoff Hart conducted the door prize raffle

7:31 Geoff Hart moves to end the meeting

Seconded and passed.