

COGS First General Assembly Meeting
September 24, 2008
Mississippi Room, Third Floor, Coffman Memorial Union

5:47 Geoff Hart, President, Introduction

5:51 Table Introductions

6:03 Favorite Coffee Shop Choices

(Starbucks, Hard Times, Whatever's Closest, Dunn Brothers, Sebastian Joes, Super America, Overflow, Amoree)

6:07 Geoff Hart, President, Powerpoint Presentation

What is COGS?

Advocate for Graduate Students

- a. Hear, Discuss & Author Resolutions
- b. Serve as an discussion forum for graduate student issues
- c. Student voice to graduate school on committees
- d. Provide Travel Grants To Students
- e. Offer Multiple Workshops (For Students By Students)

Some Past Issues COGS has Debated/Discussed

- a. Collaborative Dissertations

Past Accomplishments

- a. Reduce Stadium Fee
- b. Cheaper Nights and Weekends Parking For Students
- c. Supported Save Yar Campaign (Kidnapped Children in Sudan)
- d. Ongoing Support For UMORE Park Initiative
- e. New Sustainability Initiative

Executive Council Initiatives

- a. Increase Travel Grants to 12.5k.
- b. Make Website More of a Student Resource
- c. Use Facebook as a facilitation tool for notifications, discussions, meeting schedule and to bolster COGS' social network. (Peter Gloviczki discusses website)
- d. Work with Graduate School to create Graduate Student Network
- e. Use COGS survey to help struggling programs improve and highlight successes within programs (Mandy Stahre introduces Survey)
- f. Plan and Administer Workshop Committees

●Peter Gloviczki discusses responsibilities/opportunities for representatives

●Geoff Hart asks for volunteers for policy and review councils.

- a. Biological Sciences Council is reported to be full.

- b. Ed/Psych Council is reported to be full.
- c. Health Sciences Council—1 member volunteers. Additional members (and alternates) still needed.
- d. Language and Literature Arts Council—alternates still needed.
- e. Engineering Council—3 Openings reported and alternates still needed
- f. Social Science Committee is reported to be full (alternates still needed)
- g. GAPSA Committee reported to have four open spots.
- h. Student Senate reported to have three spots open.

●Handout about Committee Sheets

Matt Kaplan discusses sustainability committee.

- a. Pitch for members to shape/steer committee.

●Briefly introduced the planned workshops for this year but did not get time to get people to volunteer; but people may contact the person in charge if interested

●Discussed the Distance Learning proposal. A variety of concerns are recorded in the sequence that they were raised:

- a. To have more and good online courses, the U has to work with IT people.
- b. It's good for the U to have online courses so that, for example, people living in rural areas could get a certificate; There has also been a huge push to put courses online all over the country. But if ask for more, we need a system of accountability to ensure that professors are present when they are supposed to.
- c. What does the author mean by “theoretical classes”?
- d. Online courses are helpful because some students might have to miss a course that is not offered every semester due to field research.
- e. The importance of online courses varies by programs. In-person discussions might be crucial to some small programs with small number of students. So it's necessary to differentiate whether online courses are going to be supplemental or to replace the traditional courses.
- f. There are more things to be done before online courses can be offered, for instance, faculty training. Therefore, we should think of it more as a multi-effort process.
- g. We cannot simply tell different departments to do the same. They are of different nature.
- h. We should not think of distance learning as a thing of only benefits. It also involves challenges and difficulties.
- i. We need to take TAs' opinions into consideration. TAs' workload is likely to increase dramatically when courses are offered online.
- j. Other big universities also offer online course and students' experience seems positive.
- k. COGS should push for this proposal.

●Open-floor brainstorming

- a. To have a union
- b. Statistics Clinics are closing but they have been very useful.
- c. Grants for students to go to conferences and workshops
- d. CLA's TA policy on the percentage of TA vs. students; graduate students can get guaranteed funding
- e. While taking the 1-credit course and not paying the student fees, you are also not getting many services. For example, legal representation. Let graduate students be more aware of this and be able to choose.
- f. More transparency in decision-making; more informed; more opportunities to have an input (Geoff's comment: get in touch with particular P&R Chair)
- g. More information on non-resident tuition and more input on property refund