

University at Albany
State University of New York
Graduate Student Association

Report to the University Council, Drafted 29-April-2014

A significant issue that has arisen regarding the operations of the GSA. The GSA historically and currently operates its finances in conjunction with University Auxiliary Services (UAS), which acts as the GSA's fiscal agent. The GSA has had significant problems with the constantly changing rules UAS has imposed on the GSA's operations. The GSA has attempted to contact UAS for answers to questions and issues as they have arisen, but UAS has been not receptive to these concerns. These matters were made more acute when the GSA Constitutional Committee, currently in the process of amending the GSA Bylaws to be consistent with New York State (NYS) law and the GSA Constitution, discovered troubling clauses in the NYS tax law that were not reconcilable with how UAS and GSA handle financial transactions. The GSA immediately brought this concern to UAS and the Office of Student Involvement, but a solution has not been forthcoming since this issue was raised a month ago. The GSA is still awaiting an answer from UAS.

The GSA has set an Assembly Meeting to debate the final amendments proposed to their Bylaws and to potentially approve them. This meeting will likely occur before the University Council meeting, and thus I will update this matter in person.

The Presidential Forum was conducted with the GSA President presiding. Discussion was heated, but graduate students feel positively that a channel is open for them to discuss particular issues which pertain to the direction of the institution and its policies which affect its graduate students during their dissertation research, in the classroom teaching, and their future prospects.

The GSA elections were predominately uncontested affairs, with the exception of the Vice Presidency. Turnout was unfortunately low, with fewer than 150 voters, less than in many previous cycles. The current President and Vice President will be retaining their offices while all other elected office holders will change at the end of the term, on June 1, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chairperson of the GSA Constitutional Committee