

March 2021 GPSG General Assembly Minutes

Call to order: 3:30 PM

Attendance

Current Required Quorum: 27

Total Attending:

Guest Speaker

DeeDee Dayhoff presented IUCares and the CARE team. It supports students who are struggling socially, academically, or personally. The number of [care referrals](#) has doubled in the last four years, largely due to marketing. They can be submitted by anyone who has concerns about a student. When submitting, make them specific and timely. For any emergency or if you need immediate help, contact IUPD. The team follows up on every referral and takes each seriously, but the person who submitted the referral may not know the result to protect the student's privacy. The team will contact IUPD for a welfare check only when they believe there is an imminent emergency (such as suicidal thoughts and intent, a missing student, or a danger). Also, submitting a care referral is never a FERPA violation because it is something you witness.

The CARE team will do their best for students who are not located in Bloomington, working with partners. They also have access to translation services for non-English documents. For the Welfare checks, DeeDee explained that time is of the essence, so using IUPD is the best mechanism currently. IUPD also is evaluating policies and procedures of how mental health is addressed and the CARE team is looking at alternative solutions. The dream is for a mental health professional to accompany IUPD on these welfare checks.

Approve March minutes

Campus Updates

2021-22 GPSG Executive Committee Appointments are announced. Congrats to the new officers!

COVID-19: Anyone 16 or older can sign up to get vaccinated. IU and the City of Bloomington are setting up more options.

Administration Report - This 80 page document is posted on Canvas, and summarizes the committees and advocacy for the year.

Treasurer Election

The 2021-2022 GPSG Treasurer will be Dan Myers. Thank you to both candidates for participating in the election.

GPSG Budget 2021-2022 - Spring Appropriations

It was proposed for leftover funds to be allocated to research awards. The budget passed unanimously.

Resolution on the COVID-19 Vaccination

Mackenzie Cory suggested that the exemptions should be limited to medical and religious, with geographic and ethical removed. However, Dakota explained that ethical is for people who have reservations but don't belong to an organized religion.

Bradi explained that the mandate could cause problem for people who have no official medical diagnosis for a medical condition or suppressed immune systems. Bradi suggested that exemptions be allowed for students who know enough about their bodies that it could be bad for them, but have no official diagnosis. "Lived experience," similar to the mitigation testing exemptions.

The amendment is "The documentation for the medical exemption would be similar to that of the COVID-19 testing process at IU, and would allow for lived experience documentation." The amendment passed 49-3-2.

International Students Resolution

Iryna asked about countries where it is unclear if US embassies will open, for elaboration on the hybrid mode. Dakota explained that OIS will work with students who have difficulties getting into the United States to be able to attend class virtually and provide as much assistance as they can.

Zoher mentioned a problem with a PhD student who could not get into the United States and was able to attend classes, but could not receive funding through his assistantship. Intermediate funding while students are abroad would be helpful. Dakota explained that federal employment laws prevent IU from paying students when they are abroad.

Lana suggested we amend the language to note SAA policies. The amendment is ""specially outlining the expenses associated with federal regulatory compliance."

Despoina suggested we ask IU and OIS to include legal support for international students who experience problems, such as the student from China who was arrested last year. The amendment is "GPSG advocates for OIS to provide information about the legal support available to them from the University."

Shouyue suggested we include an amendment: ~~“we advocate college and department to replace SAA positions with scholarship for impacted international graduate students,”~~ to solve the problem for students abroad who are unable to get funding because of the federal laws. (this amendment was retracted in favor of the later one below)

Mackenzie asked if this amendment would mean that the SAA role (teaching etc.) would be unfilled. He believes the result of this would be increased workload on other graduate student instructors, since the funding is finite. Shouyue understands that the funding could be turned into a scholarship so the role would be unfilled. Mackenzie objected to the amendment.

Lana suggested a solution should be to refer to “promised funding,” where a student was promised funding but then was unable to accept the position because of being abroad.

Mackenzie believes a better way to state this would be a “leave of absence” with no harm to time-to-degree.

Chelsea suggests we be very specific for students who are not allowed back because of COVID, though some are still performing work. And to be very specific about where the funding should come from.

Dan Bullock asked for clarification. Chelsea explained there is an international student abroad who is performing SAA duties but not getting paid.

Despoina explained that we need to honor individuals affected and leave the responsibility to the university.

Lana explained that CoAS is establishing a working group to deal with retention. Zoher mentioned that students stuck abroad still need to pay all the fees. He suggests the language be for students in this situation to not have to pay any fee besides the international student fee, since they are not here to use the services.

The amendment is now: “We advocate for the university establish an International Student workforce for retention, funding, and responding to employment disruptions resulting from COVID-19. The university has to honor the admission letters for students who are unable to enter U.S. due to Covid restrictions.” The resolution passed as amended.

Mental health first-aid discussion

This program teaches students how to identify and support fellow students who have mental health problems. It is a two hour course. Should it be mandatory or voluntary?

Mackenzie thinks it should be mandatory for instructors who teach an off-campus class like field courses over the summer, as these situations arise there. For everyone too.

Bradi says these trainings are super helpful but is unsure if it should be made mandatory. “Strongly encouraged” or “Voluntary but highly recommended” for graduate student employees were suggested. Dan Bullock suggested incentivising it.

Wrap up

This Assembly passed the most resolutions in one year in GPSG history. Nice work everyone!

Stop by Wednesday 4/14, 5-7pm IMU solarium to get a bag of goodies at a mixer event. Masks are enforced. (double check I recorded this right)

Shouyue Zhang was recognized for his work with international students, and Lana Ruck was recognized for her service with GPSG. Lana Ruck is the recipient of the Yolanda Trevino service award. Congratulations Lana!!

Meeting Adjourned @ 5:30pm