

Voting Results:

O: 45 yes ; 1 no

P: 46 yes

Q: 40 yes ; 2 no ; 4 abstain

R: 45 yes ; 1 abstain

S: 39 yes ; 4 no ; 3 abstain

Open Forum Topics:

International Student Co-Op Fees:

Sen. COMMENT: Cmwlth Facility & Equipment 151.00

Grad Out-of-State UF Diff -799.75

Library Fee, Sum 24.75

Supplement Engineer Fee, Sum 500.00

Technology Fee, Sum 19.00

Virtual Out-St Grad Tuition, S1 1,642.25

Semester Summary: 1,537.25

CGPSP meeting (tabled for meeting discussion)

Meeting START >> 1732 hrs; 52 Senators, 73 attendees

Minutes APPROVED >> 32 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Committee / Commission Reports:

CoR -- Sen. Chuong >> Committee decided not to vote or further consider Resolutions D1 - D2. Support for the 'spirit' of the resolutions (protections for marginalized community members from a research standpoint), but did not like the potential to disrupt research, lack of protections for researchers, or GPSS involvement.

Chris Headley (National Security Institute / Hume Center) specifically citing 'misinformation' in D2 (faculty members were not recruited from ICE?). Also did not want to discriminate against hiring people involved with these practices / companies / institutions previously.

CoED -- Sen. Kara >> Resolutions D1-D2 need review from legal and are outside of the scope for CEOD. COED recommends that CFA and CoR. [VP Fox: CFA has already turned down reading these resolutions at an executive level as they fall outside the scope of the CFA charge]. Some of the GPSS Resolutions were put into the minutes of the CoED, but these Resolutions were not actually read and considered.

UC -- VP Fox & Sen. Flores >> CUS Resolution A deferred until December meeting for revisions / consultation. Parking services meeting -- possibilities for GTA / GRA spots if pushed for? Resolution for income-based parking passes [Resolution needed! Can work with Frank Shushock]? Park Mobile (people can park in park mobile spots if they have a normal parking pass!)

CUSP -- Sen. Dubner >> Juneteenth approaching approval -- will not cost an instructional day. Commencement schedule released.

CGPSP -- President Leff, VP Fox, Sen. Parrish, Sen. Malewicz, Sen. Valop, Sen. Wescott, Advisor Hoque >> Getting the contract expansion resolution on the agenda has been an uphill battle. As the meeting began, the GPSS reps noted that the agenda had been inverted to place New Business before Old Business. The room motioned to remedy this break with procedure and prioritize GPSS Resolution 21-22 B given the graduate student presence. This motion carried by a wide margin. No consensus was reached during the meeting, and an emergency session was scheduled for Monday [11/22] to provide additional time for (re)reading the resolution and bringing constructive changes to the table.

Sen. SUMMARY: During the course of that meeting, we had multiple points of contention wherein members of CGPSP did not seem to fully understand the content of the resolution before them. And multiple points at which specific clauses within the resolution were read verbatim in order to clarify points and to reframe the discussion so that we could be focusing on the actual content of the resolution rather than the supposed conjectured outcome of the resolution itself. Ultimately, we had several points at which members thought that the language being used in the resolution was not conducive to the resolution's passage to the point of one thing, to remove the be a further resolved second clause. At the end of the resolution wherein the commission for the CSPGP and paneling of the working group or task force to figure out how to not just whether to, but how to provide graduate students with the living wage with the best mechanism for that would be. And how to enact it is proposed. They wouldn't allow us to remove this saying that it counts to the issue as a budgetary item, which they contest. However, they offered us zero evidence as to if that clause was removed, they will provide their support in the first place for the passage of the resolution as a whole. And if in the event of its passage, whether they would guarantee that they would then advocate for -- not just passively support or note that it had been passed -- but actively advocate for this resolution within the rest of shared governance. We left the end of the meeting with pretty much no firm agreement upon language just to what kind of language was going to be changed. So now we get to make decisions and bring it back to them. And they have given extensively a date of Monday to reconvene and have this conversation.

Sen. COMMENT: The tone of this meeting was disappointing and condescending. They say they care about us, but they are unwilling to work to find the budget to help us. Two other options that may be worth pursuing: paying all of the comprehensive fees -- that leaves us about \$1400 short each year. Or, the three months could be remote work. They don't need to be on Campus, but most graduates prepare their classes over the summer and if they have other

worries the quality of the classes goes down. Paying people to create their classes over the summer could be helpful.

Sen. COMMENT: There was an air of willful ignorance and unwillingness to read the text. The statement 'we support graduate students' was said over and over without showing material support or willingness to try to support graduate students in the way we are asking for.

Sen. COMMENTS: 10+ Senators expressed disappointment about the organization of CGPSP in terms of timely and accurate release of agenda and materials, the disrespect and disregard of President Leff and by extension the GPSS, but were hopeful that such a meeting would help bolster grad student involvement in UG across the board.

Senators were further frustrated that it was evident several voting members of CGPSP had not read the Resolution.

Sen. COMMENT: They were extremely disrespectful of lived experience that was generously shared by traumatized grad students and were very hostile and significantly more interested in chastising students for being "unprofessional"

Sen. COMMENT: "Hey we want enough money to live" "We get that but the policies we made say we can't 😊" [6 in support]

President Leff RESPONSE: Very frustrating. They just want to vote it down and not engage with it rather than change it to try and make it better. We will keep these comments to suggest these options to be explored by the taskforce on this topic. The main goal is to increase pay by \$6500 across the summer, but that's one of the sticking points. But we will not settle for anything less, even if it doesn't come in the form of a 12 month contract.

RESOLUTION O:

Early Submission Comment: I am firmly in agreement with this resolution. I found out I was eligible for a COVID vaccine through a twitter post that I then had to fact-check.

No further comments.

RESOLUTION P:

Early Submission Comment: Wholeheartedly agreed! Well done and well phrased. I understand that contracts need room for flexibility but they are pretty opaque as to what I am agreeing to.

RESOLUTION Q:

Early Submission Comment: I don't believe tenure to be a good thing for the institution. A professors job security should come primarily from his or her effectiveness in teaching courses and guiding research. So often when a professor gains tenure, his or her students suffer from poorer teaching as the professor has less motivation or reason to be the best that he or she can be. From a students perspective, tenure comes at the greatest cost to students. Remember that each students success is the primary purpose of an academic institution, and anything that neglects their rights hurts the institution as a whole. The better the professor, the better their compensation therefore they won't need or even benefit from tenure to protect their rights.

Sen. QUESTION: How many adjuncts to faculty do we actually have?

VP Fox RESPONSE: https://udc.vt.edu/irdata/data/employees/headcount_fte/fs/index

Sen. RESPONSE: More tenure positions help alleviate job precarity and open up possibilities for faculty members to take more risks and explore new topics in their fields as opposed to grinding out publications constantly for years at a time or struggling with high workloads. This would help secure time and pay for university members.

Sen. QUESTION: How will this help with ensuring more tenure track positions are opened up for diverse higher and not just more straight, white men? [5 in support of change]

Sen. AMENDMENT >> NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED The University to ensure the office of inclusion and diversity is proactively involved during the tenure position recruitment to ensure a diverse and inclusive academic environment. Specifically prioritizing marginalized communities through hiring, mentorship, and opportunities and assisting them through the onboarding process. [6 Support]

AMEND VOTE >> CARRIED 41 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

RESOLUTION R:

Early Submission Comment: I agree that students should be given a better say in how the university operates, especially in academic decisions. Many professors are getting paid to do almost nothing. It is not fair to paying students to have to deal with bad professors and not have a say in who gets to teach them and who loses their job.

No additional comments

RESOLUTION S:

Early Submission Comments: I don't think the GRE should be completely removed. Having it optional is good because it prevents students from having to pay large amounts of money for something that doesn't directly benefit them. The GRE does give students the ability to prove their qualities in the cases where an applicant has a low GPA, but still gains necessary skills

from work experience. I do however think that a cheaper or free alternative could be better in evaluating students for acceptance along with the optional GRE."

I wholeheartedly second this resolution. As someone studying education, the GRE assesses the ability to take a test, not aptitude for graduate school. At most generous, it is a demonstration of how to quickly learn how to do something.

Agree With EMPHASIS on the whereas: , so we encourage the complete removal of the test in the admissions process rather than making it optional;

President Leff RESPONSE: See last week's debate for several good points and evidence for the removal of the GRE requirement.

RESOLUTION T:

Early Submission Comment: I don't see policy as an effective solution to this problem. If funding and opportunities are available, the policy won't be needed. If not the policy won't create funding or opportunities. I think it is better to focus on getting funding and creating opportunities rather than forcing others to solve problems that they don't have control over. Simply getting funding and creating opportunities will solve this problem

I am astonished this is not already in place

President Leff RESPONSE: So this would basically treat these open positions that aren't funded through departments or grants and streamline the process and make it open to the broader public with the idea that it'd be more widely advertised and have fair hiring practices because right, now a lot of it is unfortunately behind closed doors.

Senator COMMENT: Also very nepotistic / word of mouth / and connections based.

RESOLUTION U:

Early Submission Comment: I completely agree. The school charges too much on fees that most students don't even use or need. The overall cost of tuition is too much and does not even reflect the quality of education provided to students. The school wastes too much money on things that most students don't benefit from.

Sen. QUESTION: What is the GPSS going to be doing for the student insurance policy?

Advisor Hoque RESPONSE: In progress. Looking at placing a single insurance bid in December or January. Will be including GPSS to the extent that it is possible. Hopefully will have more information in the next couple of weeks.

President Leff RESPONSE: We will get an email out about these and posted on the website ASAP when we receive them.

Sen. COMMENT: A big problem that the current insurance plan will cover my children's dental and vision but will not cover mine without \$300 out of pocket. Just to point this out.

RESOLUTION V:

Early Submission Comments: I completely agree that the Cook Counseling Center is important and needs more funding. I also believe that the pandemic is a significant cause of the decrease in mental health of many students and this problem will naturally solve itself when the pandemic is over and mandates are lifted. Physically interacting with people is very important for the mental health of each person. I think it is safe to begin relaxing mandates to allow students to recover from mental health issues caused by fear and isolation. I think if VT cannot increase funding to increase number of counselors available to students for free, there could be a partnership with local mental health professionals where VT would pay for part of a student's fee if they go to someone not VT affiliated due to lack of mental health support on campus

Advisor Hoque RESPONSE: This is perhaps where we can use the new insurance plan to ensure costs are reduced on counseling co-pays.

Sen. COMMENT: As someone who sought help from Cooke counseling BEFORE the pandemic, I was told that they could not see me more than once every 4 weeks for no other reason than because they were short staffed. (even though they recommended weekly meetings) [4 Senators agree]

Sen. COMMENT: As a fully virtual graduate student, this issue of accessing Cook Counseling services particularly impacts us. We are not eligible to use these services on the basis of our virtual status.

Sen. COMMENT: They have shifted towards a short-term regiment of individual sessions plus groups (that are overcrowded and thus ineffective). Certain people are deemed eligible for more regular sessions—every other week at most. But I have also had counselors at Cook tell me to my face that they didn't have time for me because my problems were not acute enough. I have had four counselors in my time here because three have left from the immense pressure of working with absurd caseloads of at least 120 students each.

No further comments.

1858 hrs MOTION to ADJOURN >> 39 yes, 2 abstain, 1 cheer