



ASSEMBLY MEETING AGENDA

February 27, 2013

(updated 2/27/13)

I. Call to Order at 6:01

II. Speaker: University President Rodney Erickson

President Erickson thanks the GSA for the great work that it does, along with the other student organizations. Cherelle Douglas asked if President Erickson would be attending the Law School Commencement. President Erickson noted that if he were in the country (he has an overseas trip coming around then) he would probably be there, but that otherwise Provost Rob Pangborn would likely attend in his place.

President Erickson noted that he will be heading to Harrisburg(?) tomorrow to sit in budget talks with the state of Pennsylvania. He noted that the two main sources of revenue are tuition (80% of education budget) and state funding (13-14%). The remainder is made up from interest, indirect costs, etc. Pres. Erickson noted that the University is fighting to keep tuition rates low for next year.

President Erickson also mentioned that the potential fallout for the federal government's potential sequestration is not yet fully known, but that it could potentially remove \$250,000 in work-study funding, and another \$80,000 of need based grants, among other things. He noted that while the University would likely be able to protect *current* grants, the potential hit would affect future grants. There is potential for it to further impact research grants, funding, student loans, etc.

President Erickson also noted that the Board of Trustees has formed a search committee to find his successor. He noted that one of the most impressive things he's experienced as president was the hard work that the



students and faculty put in, and gave kudos to the GSA THON Committee's efforts.

- David Simpson asked President Erickson about the sequestration- would it affect enrollment for grad students? Would enrollment be increased, essentially to bring in more income? Pres. Erickson noted that the University wants to keep enrollment at the present levels (around 44,000). He also noted that on-campus grad student enrollment is down, but that the total numbers are up, as a result of high world campus graduate enrollments. He noted that professional graduate degrees, completed on-line, are going to continue to become more and more popular, i.e. the executive MBA program.
- Brian Aynardi asked what Pres. Erickson's primary goal was in his tenure as university president. Pres. Erickson noted that the core enterprise remain moving ahead. Teaching, Outreach, and \*\*\* Education/Research(?)\*\*\*. President Erickson noted that the University must keep moving forward- if you're standing still in education, you're falling behind. The University is launching an institute for gas research that will focus on a range of issues related to Marcellus and Utica Shale, water quality, engineering processes, extraction, etc. There are about three dozen faculty members in the field at present, and another dozen will be added over the next few years to fill any holes in coverage. The University is also looking to add ten to twelve faculty members who work on the protection of children. Some of them will be here at University Park, and others will be centered down at Hershey at the Center for the Protection of Children. Additionally, Pres. Erickson noted that recruitment and retention of undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty is always a priority.



- Completion of the “For the Future” Campaign is a priority- there are about 16 months left to go. A major component is raising funding for both the students and faculty. President Erickson stressed that career development professorships, named chairs, and competitive funding and opportunities for grad students are integral to attracting quality faculty and students.
- David Rench asked, in a follow up to Brian Aynardi’s question, if Pres. Erickson thought that undergrad enrollment would be increasing in the World Campus. President Erickson noted that while other schools, notably Columbia University had some difficulties with their similar programs, Penn State succeeded because the programs were constructed and maintained by the standard University Park faculty, and were not farmed out. He noted that over time many other schools have gotten better with their on-line programs, but that many, notably the University of Illinois, have still had trouble integrating their faculty into these programs. President Erickson asked if anyone has taken a Massive Open On-line Course. Many folks had not. Penn State will be exploring the idea of launching MOOCs, although there are details to be figured out- who pays for these free courses, or pays the faculty to teach them? The potential benefits of doing them include spreading into an overseas market, and attracting individuals to the World Campus and to traditional University Park courses. These on-line courses are the wave of the future.
- David Simpson, commenting on the increase in graduate World Campus enrollment, asked that if the need for residential instruction was depleted whether the instructors for World Campus would be brought in from the outside or if they would continue to



be the traditional University Park faculty. President Erickson remarked that he does not believe that will happen- the residential programs will always have traditional faculty, and the World Campus will have University Park faculty who split between both on-line and traditional instruction.

President Erickson also noted that the main market for the on-line undergraduate courses are the returning adult students. A good portion of adults have some kind of higher education. Many have credits from the military, from community colleges, etc and are looking to complete their degrees at places like Penn State.

- III. The agenda was shifted to allow the UPAC and UPUA liaisons to present. Jesse Scott/UPAC: UPAC has approved two graduate representative positions to serve on the committee. Please contact Jesse Scott for information. There are already three appointed, and now there will be two elected representatives as well.

Rishi Kumar Mittal/UPUA- \ UPUA is looking to change meetings to once every other week, and are also looking to change the meetings format to something less traditional. UPUA is also looking into putting MOOCs together, and working on compiling a Top Ten List of “things undergrads have problems with.” Finally, the time for undergraduate elections at rapidly approaching.

- IV. Approval of Minutes 2/13/2013 1 Min  
Nicole Benevento motions to approve the minutes from 13 FEB. Bill Dusch seconded the motion, which passed. The minutes were approved.

- V. Report by the President - Wanika Fisher 10 Min



GSA President Wanika Fisher was not present. GSA Office Manager Marcella Rabinovitch delivered the president's report in Wanika's stead and had introductions for the new people at the meeting.

Brad from Engineering.

Emily from Law School.

Grad Cup- SAT, 13 APR. At present there are about 411 people participating. Please volunteer if you are not a member of a team. You can email Marcella for more info. The game rules and activities are posted on the website.

Marcella reported what Wanika has been doing this week. Of note, the Presidential Fireside Chats will take place at the Law School on MON 11 MAR in room 241 Katz 5- 6:30PM, and on WED 6:15-7:45pm also in Katz.

Grad Exhibition is coming up- info is on the website.

Further, GSA manager (Marcella) has office hours- posted on the website.

VI. Report by the Vice President of External Affairs - Dave Rench 5 Min

Dave reported that the Freeh Advisory Council meet on 14 FEB. They have contracted a law firm to serve as the external validator of the University's actions on the Freeh Report.

Dave was involved with a discussion about the University's culture-change recommendations. They are exploring the value statements that various colleges, schools, etc already have. Essentially they are looking into whether these can be combined into a broader, University wide one. Penn State might be one of the first Higher Education Institutions involved in such a project.

Dave also noted that Capital Day is coming up- 09 APR. Registration is currently open and the link will be sent out through the listserv.



Dave reported on the Partnership- Campus and Community United Against Dangerous Drinking. With regards to State Patty's Day/Weekend, the Partnership noted that there were a lot of people, but that they were not generally destructive. This year there were half of the parking tickets of last year, and also a decrease in hospital visits. Dave opened the floor for comments-

- Cherelle Douglas noted that she doesn't like State Patty's because last year someone jumped in front of her car and damaged it. She doesn't like the idea of the holiday.
- Marika Merritt asked where the money given to the bars/taverns to keep them closed on State's Patty's Day came from? David Rench noted that a lot of it is raised through parking tickets/fines.
- David Simpson noted that he hopes the news takes and interprets the weekend's statistics/numbers in a factual and constructive way and not just celebrate a decrease in numbers. David Rench noted that it would likely be handled well.
- Katie Kragh-Buetow noted that many people, particularly those who were grad student aged and older, were upset that they couldn't get a drink after the Bon Jovi concert, on a weekend away from work, the school, etc.  
David Rench noted that these people could have gone elsewhere (the bars outside of downtown were still serving) and have been served.

Dave also noted that Osmond Lab is going to be upgraded, most of it not coming from facilities fees.



He also noted that there is a good deal of money set aside for student initiated facilitates projects. Many of the applications for projects that they have received, however, are not appropriate for facilities.

i.e. There were some students who wanted lights, a sidewalk, and an emergency phone on a dark part of campus- this request was redirected to safety, as it was not under facilities' domain.

Katie Kragh-Buetow asked if there was any money left for proposals, to which Dave Rench responded yes.

VII. Report by the Secretary - Kimeka Campbell 1 Min

Kimeka was not present, and Antwain Hunter had nothing to report in her place.

VIII. Report by the Grad Council – David Simpson 5 Min

Revisions passed, no meeting last month but will happen this month. Still some archaic and problematic language/wording with regards to what can or cannot be grounds for dismissal from an academic program. The graduate student representatives voted in opposition, but the revisions passed anyway. The grad student representatives are still working on making these changes.

David also noted that the Grad Exhibition is coming up, and that there are over 300 poster presentations. They do still need judges for the poster competition, so if you would be interested in serving, please contact David Simpson.

David noted that Vice President Hank Foley has spent money for the graduate school into a third party website, pivot.cos.com, that can be used for networking- to find others doing similar research, collaborations,



funding, etc. David is currently trying to see if the project is for grad students as well.

- IX. Report by the Faculty Senate – Brian Aynardi 1 Min  
Brian reported that there was not much news from the Faculty Senate- they will be meeting after Spring Break. The Diversity Task Force will be meeting soon, as well.
- X. Report by the Judiciary – David Simpson 5 Min  
David reported that the judiciary met last night, and got a lot of election stuff done (intent to run forms, etc.) Although there are currently some problems getting the website up and running. If you're interested in running for election, please do so.  
The Judiciary also dealt with an resolution submitted from a committee, check with the committee for information on that.  
Scott Rager asked if all of the delegates were elected at the general election  
David replied that they were, but if the positions were not filled during the election, they could be done so via appointment  
Rager asked when the deadline for intent to run was?  
Simpson replied that the intent to run was usually due the weekend before the election, so at the end of MAR this year.
- XI. Standing Committee Reports
- a. THON - Nicole Breeden 2 Min  
Nicole was absent, Marika Merritt delivered the report.  
Marika reported that "Speed meeting" is coming up- it will be like "speed dating" but more platonic- the money raised from the event will go towards the THON fundraising fund for next year.



Marika also noted that they committee was looking for models for their fundraising calendar. Marika explained to the assembly that the models do not have to be “visually appealing.” The calendar will be a fundraiser for THON. They are looking for 2-3 grad students from each college. There will be themes for each month. Email Marika ([Merritt@psu.edu](mailto:Merritt@psu.edu)) for more info.

b. Professional Development – Bill Dusch and Melisa Ziegler 2 Min

Bill reported that the Boot Camp is complete. Only 2 of the 25 participants did not finish and get their money back. There were very few complaints, most participants enjoyed it. Bill remarked that the Boot Camp was a “rousing success.”

Bill reported that 110 people registered for the Investment 101 program. Some issues with seating- need more seats!

c. Programming – Antwain Hunter and Stephanie Wilson 2 Min

Stephanie reported that the programming met with the Student Veterans Association and Fraternity last week. She noted that the programming committee was looking at getting involved with them socially and perhaps doing some joint events.

d. Student Concerns – Gabe Caceres 2 Min

Gabe remarked that the discussion with CATA are ongoing. There was nothing left to report.

e. Human Diversity – Yihan Li and Robbie Fraleigh 2 Min

Robbie reported that the committee was focused on compiling resources for diversity programs etc and on revamping the website to align with that goal. Additionally, they are looking at doing an



international film series for the fall, but are not investing in any programming for the remainder of this semester.

- f. Internal Development – Brad Sottile and Doug Whalen 2 Min  
Doug reported that there was nothing to report.

## XII. Delegate Reports

- a. Delegate Responsibilities – Antwain Hunter and Scott Rager 2 Min  
Antwain reported that the Delegate Task Force is making revisions and moving forward. They will be meeting when we return from break.
- b. Moving On- Evelyn Miller  
Evelyn remarked that Moving On has picked the artists: MGMT, Kids These Days, Brand New, Gloriana, and Big Boi. Also, Evelyn reported that the Battle of the Bands to pick the Penn State band to play at Moving On will take place on 22 MAR.

Robbie Fraleigh calls for liaison reports, of which there were none.

David Rench notes that there is a new liaison position for the Shields Advisory Committee

## XIII. Open Forum 5 Min

Katie Kragh-Buetow- comments that married grad students are underrepresented at GSA and on campus. They're sometimes unsure as to whether they can bring spouses to events, and as such they may not feel welcome.

Brian Aynardi noted that he will be speaking at the Women's Leadership Meeting in MAR.

## XIV. Adjourn



Motion made by Evelyn Miller, second my Bill Dusch. Motion passes.