**Student Senate Minutes**

**Gustavus Adolphus College**

**February 10, 2014**

1. **Attendance**
   1. Absent: Senator Wilkes, Diversity Chair Richardson.
2. **Approval of the Minutes 1/13/2014**
   1. Approved
3. **Community Comment** 
   1. NA
4. **Old Business**
   1. Board of Trustees Update
      1. Cabrera- Co presidents met with board over jterm. Discussed tobacco-free initiatives, divestment, and the status of chapel on Sundays. Also discussed senate potentially looking into what they would do in the event of a student’s death while at GAC, and what senate could put in place (memorial, etc). Discussed strengthening board/senate relations. –Brought up ambitions regarding the dive/ the upcoming PR campaign.
      2. Timmons- The board wants to make sure that the time we spend with them is fruitful. Next time they come in the spring, they want to just open up breakfast meetings just with senate members.
         1. VanHecke- All of you would have to commit to meeting with them.
      3. Cabrera- The board is very interested in hearing more of what senate and students have to say.
   2. Siatta- Question in regards to the removal of parking spots in Beck. Had concerns raised by a constituent.
      1. Timmons- Would be best to bring this up in new business.
   3. Best- What progress has been made with bylaw updates?
      1. Olsen- Working on revamping the entire constitution. Will have concrete changes on everything in the coming weeks.
5. **New Business**
   1. Day at the Capital
      1. Timmons- Traditionally there has been a strong connection between marketing/communications office and senate with planning Day at the Capital. This is a day of lobbying at the capital for the State Grant, which provides funding for applicable MN students to make funding higher education more affordable and private education more accessible. –Ask recipients of the grant to attend, and all interested GAC students. –The date is Tuesday March 18th. –We’ll work in partnership with marketing/communications. –Will ask senators to table. –The latter half of the day will (hopefully) be a networking event with alums working at the capital.
         1. Siatta- Is the grant just for MN residents?
            1. Cabrera- Just for MN residents, but still encourages out of staters to attend and advocate for fellow students.
         2. Roland- Speak on behalf of the school? Or specific students?
            1. Timmons- Really how you choose to approach it. Talk about its values. Info of recipients is protected.
            2. Hare- Do we meet with specific individuals? How do the meetings work?

–Timmons- The day before a member of/ representative from MN private Colleges comes to help prep. Students receive info about their representatives. On the day of, we meet with students from other schools attending the same day. Then, students break off and meet with their representatives.

* 1. Senate Calendar
     1. Cabrera- Wanted to give an update of upcoming calendar events.
        1. Spring Elections- March 3, 2014
        2. Co-President Applications due February 24, 2014
           1. Cabrera- \*Applications due on the 17th. (incorrect in agenda, but correct on application).
        3. Presidential Cabinet Forum- March 19, 2014 at 7pm
           1. Cabrera- Will be in the Heritage Room. Encourage you all to come because it is a senate-sponsored event. Have opportunity to speak with panel of members of the President’s Cabinet.
        4. Special Elections- March 24, 2014
           1. Cabrera- Specific elections regarding the Dive.
        5. Questions?
           1. Best- What will specifically be on the special election?

Cabrera- Another referendum on the ballot for the funding of the dive. Also planning a PR campaign with panels for students to speak with those who have worked on the dive renovation.

Burggraf- How much input do we have? Would like more of a voice in these changes (student activity fund, etc).

Cabrera- Can’t have the election until the referendum passes in senate.

Hare- What is included in the spring election?

Timmons- Co-pres election specifically. Potentially (depending on timing) the inclusion of constitutional amendments.

* 1. Siatta- Does anyone have any information on the parking situation?
     1. Cabrera- Carol Brewer (Director of Campus Safety) informed that spaces would be lost in Beck (and only Beck). Students weren’t using the red spaces there, and faculty needed more space. Only a row or two were removed.
     2. Timmons- Was under the impression that the long row of overnight parking was going to be (far row closest to Southwest) changed.
     3. Roland- Will the spaces be transplanted elsewhere?
        1. Cabrera- It has already been done.
  2. Nigro- Did the co-presidents meet with the provost?
     1. Timmons- Have been rumors regarding the removal of over 100 courses. Met with Provost Braun. The actual cuts are 3 non-tenure faculty that were nearing the third year of their three-year contract/nonbinding verbal agreement. The other cuts were profs on sabbatical/who hadn’t been teaching. The three cuts are courses that could be taught by others (were courses with only one or two students enrolled). –Braun said that we are 60 students under where we should be in our enrollment numbers. That equates to about 1 million and a half dollars- have to make cuts accordingly. Said that there is no way for there to be over 100 course cuts with the cuts that have been made. The eight cuts weren’t new, the three within that were a surprise.
        1. Hare- Did he mention which departments these cuts were in?
           1. Timmons- No.
        2. Thrash- What are the numbers with the cuts? Clarify the 8 and the three within?
           1. Timmons- There were eight that had to be made, and three within that were new. The five knew the cuts were coming.
        3. VanHecke- None were tenure or tenure track faculty.
        4. Cabrera- The cuts go into effect next fall.
        5. Schwichtenberg- Do students have input in these cuts?
           1. VanHecke- Students have the biggest voice in this when filling out faculty evaluations. The other thing is that if you are having a negative or positive experience, you can have a meeting with the director of the department or the provost.

Schwichtenberg- Can anything be done now?

VanHecke- Most of those decisions have been far down the road.

Timmons- Asked Braun this. He said that there could be potential changes, but didn’t want to lead the individuals on. He wanted to give them appropriate time to find other employment.

* + - * 1. VanHecke- A student groundswell was born of sharing these concerns. But, it is also important to remember the situation, and the cuts that are happening campus wide because of the financial concerns of the institution. There are more costs than we have of tuition money, and cuts are made to balance. –Financial aid is the biggest piece of the campus budget. The second biggest chunk is salary/benefits for employees. When budget balances must be made, job cuts are what happen. It’s important to understand the big picture, and fewer dollars because of lower enrollment. –Back in the “old days” tuition/financial aid were tweaked/raised. Now, we can’t do that as easily. To raise tuition that much you would also have to raise the financial aid budget. Have to find ways to balance the budget in other ways.
        2. Cabrera- Tuition increase won’t be as large as in past years. It will match the consumer price index.
        3. Timmons- This is also part of the equation.
        4. Nigro- Just to clarify, will specific departments be suffering? Heard that the Chinese department is on the chopping block.

Cabrera- Chinese isn’t a specific department, but a program. Courses would probably still be offered…depends on faculty.

* + - * 1. Hare- (To advisor) Who would be the best person to ask about the workforce reductions? Would like to charge the co-presidents to meet with provost to discuss the work force reduction.
        2. VanHecke- Last year Ohle said that he thought that the workforce should be reduced 1% yearly for the next few years. The cabinet noted that the cuts would have to be more than that. Also, once Ohle is no longer president there is no way to enforce such changes. Could bring this up at the forum with the president’s cabinet.

Hare- Would it be too late at that point?

VanHecke- Budget isn’t set until summer.

Hare- Yields.

1. **Announcements**
   1. Best- It is Senator Thrash’s birthday today. Wish him a happy birthday!
   2. Olsen- With election day, we also have election day tabling! Please sign up. It’s super fun!!! -Contact Olsen if interested in joining the election committee!
   3. Montes-Osorio- Finance meeting after senate tonight.
   4. Timmons- Glad that everyone is back on campus safely! –Congrats to a senator on her engagement! -Come to GChoir’s Home Concert this Sat at 7:30!
   5. Thayer- Greeter SNL this Sat! Free food! Roller-skating!
   6. Wiest- GWO performing their home concert this Sat at 1:15.
   7. Burggraf- Email rfranke@gac.edu if you’re interested in attending a protest regarding the Keystone XL Pipeline in March in DC!
2. **Adjourned at 7:47pm.**