

UConn SSW Graduate Student Organization
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 12, 2019
1:30 to 3:00 p.m.
HTB room 216

Members Present:

Kayla Perkins—GSO Secretary
Morgan Reiss—Field Advisory Committee and Educational Policy Committee (EPC)
Sequoia Patterson—CO 1st year Representative
David Reyes—LASO Co-chair
Cindy Dubuque-Gallo—DSO
Xholina Nano—PEERS Co-chair
Nina Rodriguez—Just Community
Lynne Alexander—Educational Review Committee
Milagros Marrero-Johnson—GSO Faculty Advisor
Sarah Dottor—GSO Treasurer and PRIDE Chair
Amanda Carrington—OBSWS Co-chair
Krystina Jackson—GSO Co-chair
Megan Krementowski—GSO Co-chair
Dana Kras—CO 2nd year Representative
Chrystal Sparks—IGFP 2nd year Representative (left at 3:03pm)
Jessie Black—POPR Representative (arrived at 1:52pm)
Amani Shirley—SAMI Chair (arrived at 1:39pm)
Kylie Harrington—EPC and IGFP 2nd year Representative (arrived at 1:46pm; left at 3:03pm)
Melissa Keilty—SFEJ Co-chair (arrived at 1:46pm)
Jasmine Mendez—OBSWS Co-chair
Victoria Szantyr—LASO Co-chair (arrived at 1:50pm; left at 3:03pm)

I. Meeting called to order at 1:36pm

II. Updates/ Announcements:

- a. Approval of October Steering Committee Minutes
 - i. Megan moved to approve, Sarah seconded the motion
13 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention
- b. Constitution vote
 - i. Krystina reminded leaders to vote to pass the Constitution and voting closes on 11/15
 - ii. Sequoia asked for information regarding what qualifies a GSO leader as "nonfunctioning"
 1. Krystina explained that there are role descriptions in the bylaws and removal is considered if the duties are not fulfilled for two semesters

2. Krystina also noted that the Constitution allows for GSO hours to be used for field hours if the work is applicable and advised leaders to discuss with their field supervisors if they are interested
- iii. Co-chairs requested feedback on recent coffee breaks held to engage students in voting
 1. Amanda offered that she thought they were a good idea
 2. Cindy suggested higher traffic area
 - a. Megan followed up to address that coffee break was moved to a higher traffic area on Friday
- c. SSW Dexter Voisin Event today 5:30pm - 7:30 @ Spotlight Theater
 - i. Krystina advertised this event, a talk on his new book, *America the Beautiful and Violent: Black Youth and Neighborhood Trauma in Chicago*. She encouraged leaders to attend
- d. Mid-semester check-in (Doodle Poll)
 - i. Co-chairs will send out poll for leaders to sign up for individual meetings to check-in on how things are going and how the Co-chairs can support leaders
 - ii. Co-chairs also emphasized that they are a resource for leaders all the time
 1. Sarah added that all members of the Executive Committee are resources
- e. Co-chairs reminded leaders not to schedule meetings or events during Executive Committee meetings so that all are able to attend
 - i. Sarah added to try to avoid having multiple interest group meetings at the same time
- f. Co-chairs reminded leaders to send them social media advertising so that GSO can promote all events
- g. Co-chairs reiterated that email is the main mode of communication and reminded leaders to be actively checking their email

III. Treasurer Report

- a. Approval of November Expenditure Report
 - i. Sarah made a motion to approve, Jasmine seconded the motion
17 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions
- b. Approval of GSO Budget
 - i. Cindy asked a clarifying question about the line item for leader gifts
 1. Megan clarified the gifts are a "thank you" for the hard work leaders have done this semester
 - ii. Megan made a motion to approve, Lynne seconded the motion
17 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions
- c. Clarification/questions on voucher process
 - i. Sarah explained that all voucher requests are due Monday 11/18 at 5pm for the rest of the semester and early next semester
 - ii. Jessie asked about reimbursement for an upcoming event

1. Sarah and Milagros clarified that for a reimbursement to be approved, the event has to take place after the steering committee approves the request
- iii. Sarah and Milagros noted that Items ordered by interest groups, like t-shirts or other merchandise, must be shipped to the university (i.e., OSAS) before it can be distributed. Milagros explained leaders can work with OSAS staff on this as needed

IV. Updates

a. Milagros's update

- i. Milagros discussed that her position is transitioning but she will be with GSO through this academic year
 1. Milagros shared that a search committee has been formed to find a replacement and there will hopefully be someone hired as soon as early 2020. The new hire will join Milagros at future Steering Committee meetings through the transition
 2. Milagros reminded leaders that all OSAS staff are available as resources for GSO leaders
- ii. Milagros discussed her role as faculty advisor as primarily to work with the Executive Committee to ensure everything with the organization is going smoothly. She shared that if interest groups feel it would be helpful, they are allowed to select their own faculty advisor and there is a process for this
- iii. Milagros identified that many interest groups have found getting students engaged in meetings and events to be challenging, and this has been a struggle in years past. She advised the following:
 1. Be intentional about leadership and clearly message the mission of the group
 2. Develop skills that relate to social work practice, including professionalism and asking for help when needed
- iv. Milagros reminded leaders that UConn is a public institution and so all events must be marketed and open to all students
- v. Milagros opened the floor to questions and feedback
 1. Jessie asked for clarification on where to send flyers to be sent through the listserv
 - a. Milagros stated to send them to the department email (OSAS)
 2. Chrystal asked for clarification around whether IGFP specific flyers should be sent to the whole student body or just IGFP students
 - a. Milagros stated that flyers should be sent to the whole student body at least once and then can be sent again to the concentration
 3. Sarah discussed that Milagros is also a resource for leaders to bring thoughts about GSO that they may not want to share directly with the Executive Committee

b. Co-chairs

i. Co-chairs asked for feedback from leaders who were able to attend professor mock-classes

1. Jessie attended Regina Lester-Harriat's presentation as was very impressed. She noted that Regina talked a lot about her career path and gave an interactive mock-class. Jessie also commented that although Regina is a micro-focused professor, the lecture was still applicable and interesting for macro students.
2. Amanda and Megan attended Paula Mann-Agnew's presentation and were very impressed. The presentation was focused on cultural competency and was interactive and enjoyable.
 - a. Amanda also added that she thinks it is very positive that students are involved in this process
3. Sequoya asked if the faculty search is including macro professors
 - a. Milagros clarified that because of the size of the cohort, the search committee is geared toward micro faculty because that is the identified need

ii. Upcoming GSO Events

1. GSO Leadership Dinner 11/22 6pm - 8:30pm
 - a. Location is Butterfly in West Hartford, which offers karaoke in the evening so leaders are invited to stay as late as they would like after the dinner
2. GSO Welcome Back Showcase in Spring
 - a. Co-chairs shared that starting in February, interest groups and concentrations can sign up for half hour time blocks during the common hour on Tuesdays to showcase their work and engage more students
 - b. Krystina noted that the showcase is optional but encouraged all leaders to participate
 - c. Co-chairs drafted suggestions to help leaders prepare for this event including:
 - i. A short talk on the group and/or the mission of the group
 - ii. Recent work, advocacy, or volunteering
3. Potential Student, Faculty, Staff Social in March/April
 - a. Co-chairs shared that this event would most likely be catered by Cornerstone and held in SSW basement. It is meant to be an opportunity for any students to socialize with faculty, as well as let faculty know about work that GSO has been doing
 - b. Co-chairs requested suggestions from leaders about other ways to engage faculty and students in the same event
4. Co-chairs shared the plan to hold educational trainings in March

- a. Krystina shared that the Executive Committee had discussed a pronoun training for students and asked for other suggestions for training topics
 - i. Co-chairs will create a poll with all suggestions to be voted on
 - ii. Xholina suggested mental health first aid
 - iii. Dana suggested lobbying 101
- iii. Social Media
 - 1. Student, faculty, staff, alumni, spotlight suggestions
 - a. Megan asked if any doctoral students would like to be highlighted
 - i. Cindy will bring this up to them in their next meeting
 - ii. Cindy suggested a Google Doc to create a running list for spotlights
 - 2. GSO Bulletin Board
 - a. No updates
 - 3. Co-chairs discussed interest in creating a Working Committee for creating social media guidelines for all interest/representative groups.
 - a. Megan clarified the task of the group to include creation of guidelines of what to do and not to do on social media as well as ways to maximize GSO and interest group social media presence
 - b. Sarah, Lynne, and Dana indicated interest at this time
 - i. Interested leaders will set up a time to meet to begin brainstorming
- iv. Community action
 - 1. Volunteer opportunities
 - a. Krystina shared the Hamden Police Commission will be meeting tomorrow and indicated the importance of having representation at this meeting to address a recent unlawful shooting for which no officer has been held accountable
- c. School Committees
 - i. Educational Policy Committee
 - 1. Morgan shared that the committee has been talking about electives but there are barriers around when and how often these classes are offered
 - 2. The committee also discussed focused areas of studies, which are not being utilized as much as in the past
 - 3. Kylie shared they will bring the results of the IGFP survey to the committee as they are interested in student feedback

4. Krystina mentioned a student at POPR field advising is interested in getting in contact with EPC. She will follow up with Morgan and Kylie.
5. Kylie discussed the committee's goal to update language to make clear to students that they must be in contact with the Field Education Office over the summer in order to secure field placement
- ii. Educational Review Committee
 1. No updates
- iii. Field Education Advisory Committee
 1. Morgan discussed an upcoming meeting on Friday. She was not on the agenda but is following up with the appropriate contact
 2. Morgan explained the focus will be on continuing last year's work, such as pushing for an orientation for field
- iv. Just Community
 1. Nina shared they will be meeting Monday with the goal of ironing out details for a solidarity hour collaboration with BH365
 2. December 5th: toiletry packing party to put collected donations in packages to be distributed to shelters
 3. Nina shared she has been working on getting students access to audiobooks through UConn libraries
 - a. Dana suggested working with student disability services through the university
 4. November 20th 5:30-6:30: solidarity hour focused on immigration and migration
- v. International Center
 1. November 20th 2-3pm: *Rust Belt New Americans* film screening and discussion
- d. Concentrations
 - vi. IGFP
 1. Chrystal shared that she met with faculty and shared the preliminary results of the IGFP survey. Some topics discussed included:
 - a. Pressure on students to have clients at their field placements in the first half of the first semester
 - b. Classes that are cancelled due to lack of enrollment and the barriers around this
 - c. If skills lab should be mandatory for all macro students and if not, how to update micro foundation class requirements
 - vii. CORG
 1. Dana discussed the recent macro event and expressed feeling a little disappointed by the turnout

- a. Krystina shared that she had a great time at the event and thanked Dana and Jessie for planning it
- 2. Sequoya discussed the advisory board meeting she attended. The main topic was how to staff the grassroots organizing class that was previously taught by two professors, one person of color and one not to offer varied perspectives. Recently, the professor of color resigned and students want a continued diverse perspective
 - a. Sequoya shared that she created a list of criteria for recruiting applicants including that they must have an MSW and have CO experience
 - b. She also shared that students have encouraged professors to invite speakers of color to class to bring a diverse perspective
 - c. Sequoya asked for suggestions from leaders of speakers or potential long-term professor
 - i. Krystina Jackson suggested Ayesha Clark
- 3. Milagros discussed that she is working with Dr. Kurz to identify strong candidates for adjunct positions and compiling a list of these candidates
 - a. To this end, Milagros asked that any GSO leaders with suggestions for adjunct faculty or speakers communicate with her so that everyone working on this issue is on the same page
- 4. Cindy suggested creating a running list of speakers for leaders to contribute to
 - a. Krystina suggested building from the existing list of potential BH365 speakers, which she will send to leaders


viii. POPR

- 1. Jessie shared that she tried to solicit feedback at macro event about future events macro students would like to see but did not receive specific suggestions
- 2. Jessie has been meeting with Dr. Thomas and is planning a training for POPR students during seminar
 - a. She will be creating a survey to gauge topics of interest
- 3. November 20th 9-11pm: Jessie will host a viewing party for the Democratic debate
- 4. Jessie shared an opportunity for an event that could be sponsored by GSO
 - a. Carrie Saxon Perry was the first Black female mayor of Hartford and was a social worker. She was treated poorly by the Hartford Courant during her time in office, and the paper did not acknowledge her passing a year ago. Would GSO want to have some kind of event, like a memorial or remembrance?

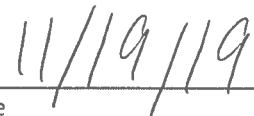
- i. Interested leaders will meet to begin planning this event for next semester
- ix. DSO
 - 1. Cindy shared upcoming events including the end of semester gathering for students, faculty, and staff and professional development opportunities for doctoral students
 - 2. March 30th 12-5pm: mental health disparities conference through ORS. Flyer forthcoming
- e. Interest Groups
 - x. OBSWS
 - 1. November 18th 6:30pm: Friendsgiving event with some conversation. The event is a potluck and there is a Google Doc to sign up for what to bring
 - xi. PRIDE
 - 1. Sarah shared that the PRIDE Co-chair is taking a leave of absence from the program
 - 2. Sarah will be changing up the meeting time of PRIDE to try to engage more students
 - 3. Sarah offered feedback to any leader looking for help with promoting events
 - 4. March 22nd & 23rd: True Colors conference at UConn Storrs for LGBT youth. Sarah shared the event is always looking for volunteers and it is a great event. Interested leaders may sign up to volunteer on the website
 - xii. SAMI
 - 1. Amani discussed low student engagement in meetings
 - 2. Amani shared potential events based on offerings from last year, including a tour of a facility and a toiletry drive for the Reentry Center
 - a. Would be offered next semester
 - 3. Krystina shared that she and Amani graduated from the Obama Foundation this weekend
 - xiii. LASO
 - 1. Vote to approve David as Co-chair
 - a. Jessie made a motion, Cindy seconded the motion 18 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions
 - b. Milagros requested a meeting with David to make sure he is up to date on the responsibilities
 - 2. November 21st: Community meeting to get information about what types of events students would like to see from LASO
 - xiv. PEERS
 - 1. Xholina shared that the group has had good attendance at events
 - 2. November 19th 6pm: sensory based stress relief event

3. November 20th 6-8: Potluck and karaoke event
- xv. SFEJ
 1. Melissa shared that meetings have had low attendance
 2. Next meeting is December 5th

V. Meeting adjourned at 3:06



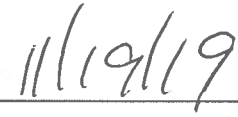
Kayla Perkins, Secretary



Date



Milagros Marrero-Johnson



Date

