

Minutes of Student Government Meeting

Date: April 7th, 2006; 5-6pm; room 601

Attendance: 7 students (the participants decided to not publish the names because of the sensitivity of the vote that took place)

Meeting chaired by Natalie Rodic and Torsten Jochem

1. Greeting; Presentation of Agenda

2. Discussions

2.1 GPIA listserv

The meeting pivoted around the current debate of the usage of the general gpia listserv. (Background: The discussion was prompted through a non-GPIA student who had publicly asked for feedback on different courses and professors. One faculty had disapproved the request on the basis that this would be inappropriate for a mailing list onto which also professors and alumni are enlisted. In the aftermath, the student government had received several emails of students, expressing frustration that there was no channel available on which students could ask for information on courses and professors.)

The student government members attending the meeting agreed that there is unmistakably a need for students to find out about how courses are taught (for instance because of the high amount of incoming and leaving adjunct professors). A discussion took place whether the general gpia listserv would be an appropriate place to do so. The discussion ended with a vote (6 in favor, 1 against) that (a) as long as there was no other channel for students available, and (b) as long as any subsequent answers would be sent privately, then the general gpia listserv could be used by students to publicly ask for feedback on courses and professors. Further, the vote decided to issue a statement reflecting this vote over the gpia listserv to make its view public.

Further the participants focused on the question how students could best find out about course feedback. The benefits of a student-only channel to facilitate interaction between students was acknowledged fast. Also, students regularly evaluate courses at the end of each semester. Participants told that in other universities as well as in departments of The New School (e.g. Milano), course evaluations are made available to students. Besides a student-only channel to exchange information, student access to aggregated course evaluation results would be of great benefit. The student government will look further into this.

2.2 Room situation

Sarah had repeatedly reported about room shortages when organizing GPIA events. Also, the issue has surfaced several times when professors had tried to shift classes (e.g. to organize make-up classes). Natalie, Sarah and Torsten will approach the university administration to address the topic of a greater need of rooms for GPIA. If someone would like to join, please let us know.

2.3 Alumni update

Natalie, Sarah and Torsten will approach the alumni office in order to find out on what networking capacities are planned between alumni and the existing student body. If someone would like to join, please let us know.

2.4 Budget through OSDA

The OSDA-application is filled out and will be filed the coming week. The student government should therefore achieve to become a recognized student organization by the next semester.

2.5 Concentration meetings

Torsten proposes to hold concentration meetings or seek through an alternative more informal form students' feedback in those concentrations which haven't had yet a meeting this semester. Since the semester is coming fast to an end, this would need to be organized soon.