

UConn SSW Graduate Student Organization
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 3, 2020
1:30 to 3 p.m.
SSW room 229

Members present:

Krystina Jackson—GSO Co-chair
Megan Krementowski—GSO Co-chair
Jessie Black—POPR concentration chair
Natalie O'Connor—OSAS Program Assistant
Kayla Perkins—GSO Secretary
Sarah Dottor—GSO Treasurer
Milagros Marrero-Johnson—GSO Faculty Advisor (left at 2:05pm)

- I. Meeting called to order at 1:38pm

- II. Milagros provided updates about GSO leadership transitions and graduation
 - a. GSO leadership transition
 - i. Milagros asked if anyone has indicated interest in GSO leadership positions formally
 1. Krystina discussed that leaders did not formally declare this at the last Steering meeting but that some leaders, Kelly Ha and Vicky Szantyr, have expressed interest in the Co-chair positions offline
 - a. Milagros noted that interested leaders must formally declare the position of interest at the next Steering meeting because elections will need to be held if there is a high level of interest
 - ii. Milagros noted that the secretary is reserved for a first-year student, so the information about this position will be sent out to incoming students and candidates will be identified at a later date
 - iii. Milagros reminded Co-chairs that they will need to submit expenditures for the transition period. She noted these expenses include things like light refreshments for the GSO table at advising sessions, as well as food for the Meet and Greet and first Steering meeting of the next academic year. She advised that expenses be based on what was spent last year, and the vendor is TBA
 - iv. Milagros discussed that leadership training for the fall will still be held in partnership with Leadership of Greater Hartford
 1. She added that in partnership with the SSW administration, the new OSAS Program Coordinator/GSO Advsiior will work to create accountability policies and procedures to assist student leaders with issues that may arise

- v. Milagros asked Sarah if they have identified anyone who may be interested in filling the treasurer position. Milagros noted that this position needs to be filled before the school year ends because of training that needs to take place over the summer
 - 1. Sarah indicated they have not heard of any interested students at this time
 - 2. Krystina suggested advertising to the larger student body that the position is paid to garner interest
 - 3. Sarah and Milagros mentioned the time commitment and level of responsibilities may not be enough to recruit someone even though it is paid
- b. Graduation
 - i. Milagros noted that in past graduation ceremonies, there have been two brief welcome comments from graduating students, one in English and one in Spanish. This will be changing with this year's ceremony, which will be a commencement ceremony and will continue to include the hooding of MSW graduates with the addition of presenting of diploma sleeves for all graduating BSW, MSW, and DSW students
 - 1. Milagros discussed that the student welcome may not occur due to the addition of the commencement formalities. However, in speaking with Dean Heller it may be a possibility that we have a brief welcome in English by an MSW student and in Spanish by a BSW student
 - a. The theme of each speech should address the student experience in the School of Social Work, focusing on education as a transformative life experience and speaking to how education at the SSW specifically contributed to this for all students and is not based on personalized experience
 - b. Krystina asked how students will be nominated for this opportunity
 - i. Milagros discussed that students can nominate themselves or by submitting someone's name. GSO graduating members will vote to select the speaker
 - ii. Natalie will send more information if we move forward with this process.
 - ii. Krystina asked about GSO funding for graduation stoles, specifically if they could be given to GSO leaders as graduation gifts
 - 1. Milagros stated that GSO funds cannot be used to purchase any stoles. GSO is welcome to organize a group order and collect money from interested graduates
- c. Orientation and Advising for incoming students

- i. Milagros and Natalie discussed new student orientation. In the past, students including GSO leaders have been present to help with check-in and to lead tours and answer questions after orientation
 - 1. Jessie suggested reaching out to out of state students to offer extra support, especially around housing
 - a. Milagros noted that orientation this year will be conducted with smaller, more focused groups which include specific orientation for out of state students and non-traditional students
 - 2. Krystina asked if it would be possible for GSO to be involved in the orientation presentations, or if student leaders could speak about their experience with GSO
 - a. Milagros noted that there are eight different orientation sessions at various times of day, and there would need to be consistent GSO representation at each session
 - i. Krystina requested a list of dates and times for these sessions to gauge interest of leaders
- ii. Milagros discussed student presence at advising sessions, which will take place in May. Natalie provided the specific dates, noting that CO advising will take place on May 13, and all other advising will take place from May 19. Milagros indicated it would be appropriate for GSO to have a table and potentially a presentation to take place after the advising session and to include refreshments
 - 1. Milagros noted this should be led by next year's Co-chairs to begin the transition of event planning

III. Review of current GSO leadership interest and commitment

- a. Co-chairs reported that they will send out an email to leaders with the agenda for the Steering meeting next week. They will also remind leaders to come prepared to declare interest in leadership positions for next year.
 - i. Milagros added that If someone cannot attend the meeting but is interested in a leadership position, they will need to email her ASAP to formally indicate interest

IV. Operational Updates

- a. Student activity meeting/presentation debrief
 - i. Kayla reported that the call was brief. Kayla shared updates about the work GSO has done this academic year based on points provided by Co-chairs, Milagros commented specifically about difficulty engaging students, and Bruce spoke to the details of the budget. The committee did not have specific questions

V. GSO Events

- a. Upcoming PEERS & PRIDE event

- i. PEERS and PRIDE will be collaborating on many events before the semester is over
 - 1. Empower hour Friday, 3/6, 11:30-12:30
 - a. Sarah will be facilitating a discussion about identity, self-confidence, and resilience and Xholina will lead a related activity
 - 2. Yoga event 3/4, 5-6pm
 - 3. Upcoming Zumba event and group sound therapy event
 - a. Sarah discussed that these events, as well as the yoga event, will feature outside instructors to lead the activity
- b. Sarah suggested reminding leaders at the upcoming Steering meeting to put meetings and events on the official SSW calendar to avoid conflicts
- c. Brainstorm end of year events
 - i. Co-chairs discussed various end of year events
 - 1. Mixer with faculty, staff, and all students
 - a. Venues will be discussed at Steering meeting
 - 2. Leadership dinner
 - a. Co-chairs discussed gifts for leaders, and if something should be done specifically for graduating leaders
 - i. Kayla noted that leader gifts have been discussed at Steering meetings previously, and non-graduating leaders may be expecting gifts as well
 - b. Venues will be discussed at Steering meeting
 - 3. Gifts for graduating MSW students
 - a. Megan asked for feedback about gifts for graduates, and if this should be for GSO leaders or graduates generally
 - i. Sarah suggested purchasing a limited amount of merch (e.g., 100 t-shirts/sweatshirts) and offering these to graduates on a first come, first served basis either at OSAS or at an end of year social event
 - 1. Jessie suggested an event at a location like City Steam, where graduates could purchase their own food and drink and the first to arrive would receive the merch
 - b. Co-chairs will contact Presto Print regarding pricing and merch will be discussed at the Steering meeting
- d. Educational Training - Flint proposal
 - i. Jessie discussed the proposed event. There will be a workshop for approximately 35 students on Thursday, April 9 from 1:30-3pm. The workshop will be facilitated by Dr. Cedric Taylor from Central Michigan University. It will focus on using media and film in activism and to highlight social justice movements, specifically looking at creating documentaries using smart phones. In the evening, there will be a

screening of *Nor Any Drop to Drink: Flint's Water Crisis*, followed by a Q&A with documentary writer/director Dr. Taylor and a resident of Flint willing to speak to the lived experience during and after the crisis

1. Krystina reminded Jessie that Dr. Taylor needs to become a vendor
 - a. Jessie will follow up with Iris about this process
 2. Jessie noted that she hopes to collaborate with groups at Storrs to secure co-sponsorship of the event
 - ii. Jessie checked in with Sarah about voucher requests for this event
 1. Sarah reminded Jessie that requests for events in April will be due by 4/6 at 5pm
 - e. International Center is holding a bake sale 3/6 11-3:30 in the HTB lobby
- VI. Approval of expenditure report
- VII. Black History 365
- a. Krystina requested feedback on BH365 Opening Ceremony and Black, Queer, & Proud event
 - i. Sarah and Kayla both commented that the Opening Ceremony was a great event and very well attended
 - ii. Krystina reported that she heard positive feedback about the Black, Queer, & Proud event
 - b. Upcoming BH365 events
 - i. Krystina discussed an upcoming women's panel to highlight Black women in the field to celebrate Women's Month and Social Work Month
 1. Specifically, this event will focus on the perception of an abolitionist identity and how this intersects with macro and micro social work
 - ii. Krystina discussed a Her story/History display to be installed at the LOB or Town Hall to highlight Black women who have contributed to the field
 - c. Debrief meeting with Dean Heller
 - i. Krystina reported on a conversation with Dean Heller. The Dean indicated the administration intends to create a line item in the budget to ensure continued funding for BH365 initiatives that will not impact funding for other student groups
- VIII. Additional questions, concerns, or recommendations
- IX. Meeting was adjourned at 2:40pm

Milagros Marrero-Johnson
GSO Advisor

Date