Graduate and Professional Student Senate

Executive Meeting Minutes Session 11

NOV 23, 2015 | HUB 303

Members Present:
GPSS President Alex Bolton
GPSS Vice President of Internal Affairs Monica Cortes Viharo
GPSS Vice President of External Affairs Brian Taubeneck
GPSS Treasurer Kerstin Hudon
GPSS Secretary Soh Yeun (Elloise) Kim
GPSS Executive Senator Yasmeen Hussain
GPSS Executive Senator Joseph Telegen
GPSS Executive Senator Brian Tracey
GPSS Director of University Affairs Austin Kinney
STF Committee Chair David Goldstone
STF Committee Coordinator Alton Lu

Call to Order 9:07 am

STUDENT TECH FEE
Presenters: STF Committee chair David Goldstone, STF Committee coordinator Alton Lu

Yasmeen Hussain asks if there is any existing job description of STF chair.

Alton Lu thinks that last year chair Jared started it. Right now the STF committee just puts what needs to be done on the job description.

Elloise Kim says that last year there were concerns regarding lack of information on the STF website such as committee members’ name and contact information, and yet it is still not there.

Alton Lu says that the STF website is still in progress, but he would like to share what it might look like with the GPSS Executive Committee. uwstf.org is its new website address. The committee is still refining it and will add more things. There are two documents that will be presented and need to be approved: STF Request for Proposals 2015-2016 (RP) and STF Yearly Funding 2015-2016 (YF).

1. STF Request for Proposals 2015-2016
Overview: The biggest change in terms of their deadlines comes from a fast track proposal. STF has a fast track proposal cycle to expedite funding. Within the first week applications will close, and the committee will fund them as soon as they can. A deadline for a fast track and a normal proposal used to be same, but the committee has decided to split them because their RP is going to be approved late this year and also because they started later this year. Now the deadline for a
fast track proposal is January 8th and a deadline for a standard proposal is January 26th.

STF has created a new software development category this year. Last year the committee saw a lot of proposals coming in requesting for software and therefore has decided to open up a new software fund. Also, the last year’s oversight committee brought a lot of improvements. The biggest one is the compliance policy which details what people agree to by submitting a proposal to STF such as maintaining equipment. The actual proposal process is slightly different, but the information is quite similar to one from the last year. They also have added some questions commonly asked on the website to streamline information.

Alex Bolton notices that the document states the website would start to run, but Alton just has said the website is not ready yet.

Alton Lu says that the website is finished except for the proposal part. There are some other style and functionality changes. But people can submit their proposal from today without any issue for the link has been be updated.

David Goldstone says that the committee has many ambitious goals for the website improvement, which is why STF hired a full time web developer.

Alton Lu says the proposal restriction shows what STF is not going to fund.

Alex Bolton asks whether they are general philosophical changes or more about specific things.

David Goldstone says that anything that is strictly required to get one’s degree is not something that STF typically funds. If students are not able to finish their degree without it, STF needs to question how their department is supporting them, which is one of the general difficulties outlined in the document.

Joseph Telegen asks whether there was a case in which STF had to deny a proposal but the department was ultimately able to fund it.

Alton Lu says that Jazz Program of the School of Music once came in requesting for audio equipment. At first the committee thought that performance was an integral part of musical education, which led the committee to believe that the department was not supportive of its students’ education. But through conversations, STF found out that the department had just hired five new faculties and did not have enough funding as a result. The committee ended up funding the proposal even though it was in the first place the departmental responsibility and was technically against their restriction. Alton does not think that in the future STF would fund such a case again.

Another example is the Physics Department requested personal computers for their student offices. The argument they had was that their computers were dying out and they were required for student research. That also showed that the department was not properly supporting its students when they had to, so STF did not fund that. It might vary on a case by case basis, but STF maintains generally a supplementary funding. If it is required to finish one’s degree, his department, not STF, should fund it.
Alex Bolton expresses his concern regarding a tech loan proposal. He wonders if STF funds all of them and if so, what is the reason for that.

David Goldstone says that there are four reasons. 1) First it is for consistency. STF does not want to confuse proposal authors. For they have changed a lot and therefore they want to make sure it is accessible, which was improved last year. 2) Second reason is that once STF funds insurance, it becomes challenging to determine which one the committee should or should not fund. Until the committee figures out a better definition of it, they will have to be conservative about it. 3) Third, they are talking with the UW IT about their support for STF and other programs. STF wants the UW IT to be able to fund the insurance, considering that UW IT pays the administrative salary and maintenance support for this program. 4) Lastly, due to the way budget is set up, they cannot keep it open for more than one year.

Alex Bolton asks whether in the past STF paid insurance for this program.

David Goldstone believes that the committee did, though they did not fund it last year.

Alex Bolton understands why the harsh language has been included in the document, but he also does not want the language to become an excuse for SAF to pay for it.

Alton Lu says that it is an ongoing discussion within the committee. Generally STF does not want to pay for insurance for every proposal.

Alex Bolton agrees. But he also thinks that it makes more sense for STF to pay for it rather than SAF.

David Goldstone says that STF will continue to work on it with the UW IT and there are many people appointed to the committee through the GPSS and the ASUW who are avid supporters of the insurance. He thinks, however, that STF would end up with no insurance. A major problem was the Adobe Creative Suite. The committee is currently working on their contract with the Adobe because they has changed up their contract condition; so there are a number of challenges that the UW IT really needs to stand up to.

Yasmeen Hussain says that on page 7, under “Use of Funds” “price” is missing from the end of the last sentence. It says “of the same” but she thinks it would be helpful to have the “price” included in the sentence.

Alton Lu says that the funding categories have not changed much from last year. About 1% movement is about software development, which is difficult to evaluate. They took fund from their old software category because software is not very heavily requested. STF is funding about 50K as a test run to see what response they would get on campus.

Kerstin Hudon echoes what David has said about the ASUW meeting. The committee went through the RFP and spent a lot of time talking about several contentious issues, and the only remaining issue is insuring the program. Since this is the RFP but not the bylaws, there is still a
room for insurance. With that in mind, Kerstin motions to approve the RFP.

**Alex Bolton** proposes a vote. Those who are in favor of the RFP, please say “aye”. (All says aye. No opposition; no abstention)

STF’s RFP has been approved.

### 2. STF Yearly Funding 2015-2016

**Alton Lu** says the documents breaks down where STF finance goes, their estimate spending, and their operational timeline this year. It also outlines some of the committee’s goals as well. After the last year’s experience, the committee has looked at where the committee failed more closely. The discussion that came out of the proposal meeting focused around 3 main goals.

1) First is about its outreach and equity. There were a couple of instances that several departments felt that they weren’t funded as often as other departments. It has made the committee to question whether some departments know about the STF’s funding better that can lead to such a gap. The committee has realized that there is a problem in outreaching for smaller departments. STF will try to broaden their outreach so that they can extend to departments that do not know the existence of STF resources well yet.
2) Second is their evaluation. Last year the committee listened to applicants for 3 minutes and then had a 5 minutes long Q&A. They are seeking ways to improve the evaluation process. It can involve more committee filed trips or the committee’s better understanding needs of each department and students to understand proposals from all facets.
3) Lastly, impact, which is the committee generally struggles with. STF funds proposals, gets an annual report, and does field visits. But they do not actually see how students are using the equipment funded by STF and what comes out of their funding. They are looking for ways to measure and quantify the impact of STF funding to see what the students are accomplishing with it.

These slides shows their budget outlook. Page 15-16 shows STF will lower their supplemental and administrative budget and put them into proposals instead. The money we got from last year will go to fast track and any fast track budget left over will go back to the general budget.

**Kerstin Hudon** asks Alton to explain why STF is still keeping the supplemental budget as high as they kept it last year.

**Alton Lu** says that normally the budget would be up to $2,000, but the committee has kept it high for a conservative reason in case there is any deviation this year. But if it is not spent, it will go to proposals as well. Same with administrative budget: the committee didn’t fund that much, but they still like to have a buffer zone just in case. Also they will be hiring more people. They also underspent fund from proposal from 2014 and 2013.

**Alex Bolton** asks how much did STF underspent last year.

**Alton Lu** says that he doesn’t have the specific number on the top of his mind, but each project
has about $2,000 left. So he would estimate it is about 70K. They also had one substantial proposal that returned their entire fund because there was some problem with the project. That was about another 90K.

**Alex Bolton** is interested to see what their plan is this year and who is going to coordinate the advertising.

**Alton Lu** says that it will be himself and the communication officer. Last year they advertised on the Daily and did some email promotions. They will continue to do those this year, but they will also widen the scope. They will post on the UW IT, which they did not do last year. **(Alex Bolton: Does STF have social media?)** Yes, but they are struggling with it. On social media they need to do continual update its content. But they have not measured what students have accomplished with STF funding, so there is not much for them to post yet. But they hope to figure it out soon.

**Yasmeen Hussain** says someone suggested last year to post pictures of equipment that were funded by STF.

**Alton Lu** says that they want content that would drive inbound traffic.

**Alex Bolton** suggests STF to consider sharing educational content. He understands that it would be a joint effort for communication. But if they do not see advertisement effort, who should they follow up with?

**Alton Lu** says that it should be Sunjay. **(Monica Cortez Viharo: does STF have a sticker?)** Yes. They have to request it. When they do field trips, they will also assess whether they need to put a sticker on equipment.

**David Goldstone** says that they had 103 proposals last year in comparison of 80 of the previous year. STF learned a lot on how to get a large amount of proposals within a week or two. The key things is that deans’ email lists can be an effective tool for outreach. They are also partnering up with undergraduate research programs in order to get Mary Gates Scholars to apply because they are often underrepresented in proposals. They have partnered up with Student Life as well because STF has funded a lot of their cameras - they hope to get some pictures from Student Life for social media postings. Yet, they would love to take advantage of all the ideas the GPSS Executive Committee has.

**Elloise Kim** still sees some conflict in this year’s outreach effort. It seems like that STF is very satisfied with the fact that they got more proposal last year after the restructuring, which is great, but she thinks, for example, there is a significant lack of effort to reach out to students who are not tech-oriented major. That kind of outreach effort is still missing. So, it would be great if STF enhances its accessibility for liberal arts students as well.

**David Goldstone** says they are definitely not complacent. They are always striving for improvements.
Yasmeen Hussain says the communication officer is in charge of advertising, but that is not in his job description at all.

Alton Lu says that it was in the job description last year when STF hired him. But they will update it on their new website.

Kerstin Hudon says before the conversation moves off to the main budget, there is one thing she wants to point out to the committee. This document does not have a revenue projection, and she think, for the document to be the best, it needs to have a revenue projection. If the Executive Committee choose to approve the STF’s RFP, she would want it to be contingent on efforts to have an accurate revenue projection.

David Goldstone says that one of the things the STF committee has recognized from last year is a lack of accurate budgeting from what they received OPM. They had a conversation with Lincoln to try to get a more accurate number. He said he would get the numbers in March.

Kerstin Hudon mentions that SAF is trying to get their projection by February for the coming year.

Alex Bolton questions how the STF can do budgeting when they do not have the number needed.

Alton Lu says that they proxied off last year but it was conservative. But by doing so, there would be always a little gap. It is still a work in progress.

Alex Bolton says that along those lines, the GPSS Executive Committee wants to make sure that there is a good communication between the GPSS and STF. The GPSS has a strong network, so if STF has a tight deadline, The GPSS can spread information through its own network.

Alton Lu says that the biggest problem in previous year was that they did not have a set time for each quarter. In the fall quarter the committee had met on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm first and then they moved their meeting time to Friday 2:00 pm. But it did not work well even though they were trying to be flexible with the committee members’ schedule. The biggest miscommunication resulted in people dropping out because they were unavailable. But this year, they decided to meet regularly on Monday, 4:00 pm, which has eliminated a lot of miscommunications. It also created a better scheduling for proposal presentations.

Alex Bolton asks if the committee is planning to meet on Mondays, 4:00 pm for the rest of the year. (Yes.) He also asks if the STF is complying with OPMA. (Yes.)

David Goldstone says that their idea is ex-officio from the ASUW and the GPSS will be a point of contact to deliver information. He agrees that the GPSS has a great network, and STF would love to utilize that network to send out information.

Yasmeen Hussain says that in the spirit of open communication, it would be great if the GPSS Executive Committee do not need to just rely on Kerstin. They need to make sure the report is
directly sent to the GPSS Executive Committee.

**Elloise Kim** asks whether STF has a full committee now.

**Alton Lu** says that the ASUW members tend to be more difficult to keep, while GPSS members tend to be more stable. He asks how the GPSS selects its representatives.

**Alex Bolton** says it is partly because grad students stay longer and their schedule tends to be more flexible.

**Elloise Kim** suggests if STF communicates what is expected for its committee member more specifically it would help recruiting quality members with a better retention rate.

**Alto Lu** says that this is estimate spending but they do not expect any significant deviation. Most of them work around 8 hours per week. They have gotten the estimate cost for salary by looking at how many hours people worked last year and multiplying them by wage.

**David Goldstone** says that the chair of SAF and STF are moving to salary positions.

**Alton Lu** says that this is in the breakdown of category. The budget and expenditure deviate greatly mostly because of the second round where we did not have a category restriction. The percentage allocations for 2015-16 have based on what was requested last year and the committee’s vision. For example, computers typically get funded a lot, but the committee does not want it to just become a computer lab fund. They think that there is a more unique technology that STF can support.

**David Goldstone** says that one of their goals this year is to better allocate fund for computer labs in arts and sciences buildings. They are working towards identifying the best way to meet the computer labs’ needs. We also have a big push toward remote computing - College of Engineering is working on centralizing that because they want to cut out labs in favor of space efficiency - space is the most valuable commodity on this campus.

**Alex Bolton** says it concerns him because computer labs are something everybody can use and has access to.

**David Goldstone** says that the remote computing is particularly for the College of Engineering for specific software that is graphic and computational intensive. They also recognize there is a large need to fund computer labs, which is why STF continues to fund Odegaard hundred thousands of dollars toward computers every year.

**Alton Lu** says that the biggest change is the committee vision. Even they underfunded last year, there is still an increase in percentage. For instance, Informatics has a big push for collaboration spaces rather than just computer labs. There is also a general trend for students to bring their own devices. Computer labs are transitioning to collaboration spaces, where students bring their own device and connect it to a big screen. There is a recommendation that students may bring their own device, but there is still a need for computer labs. Software development is straightforward.
There is a need to incentivize proposal authors.

A key server is a STF project that it started four years ago. The ideas that if it has Photoshop in its server, it can serve the licensed Photoshop that can be used in Odegaard, for example, and that can go back to the server and then can be used in Suzzallo. STF then needs only one licensed program to serve two locations. It reduces cost. Instead of buying a license for every computer on campus, they may buy the maximum amount of usage of Photoshop at one point of time, and keep that number of its use. This reduces costs, and also allows ST to track how often the software is being used and where it is being used. STF is using a converted 2013 software budget. We are optimistic that it could last over 6 years.

At the moment, the parts that STF actually pays are contract and services, licenses, and wage. But they do not expect the cost would deviate much. They have left the wage empty because if the UW IT does not pay for it, STF will pay for it because they do not want it to go away. If they do end up paying, the cost will rise a lot. But everything will go well. They had paid the first year of the manager’s wage, and then UW IT took over. There were a lot of transitions when it comes to wage.

They will send out the operational plan tomorrow morning if it is approved and they will start to advertise it. We have talked about the numbers of proposals we might get. The timeline really depends on the number of proposals they would get. If they get 60, they might finish in winter quarter; if they get 100, we will have to go into spring; if they get more than that, they will have to adjust. They simply cannot estimate how many they would get, so this timeline is really an estimate. In order to split the workload if they get a lot of proposals, they would want committee members to be specialized in a few proposals, so that they can teach other committee members about it.

Kerstin Hudon says that pending some form of a revenue projection for the year would be made, she motions to approve the document.

Alex Bolton says all those in favor, say “aye.” (all said ayes; no opposition made.)

STF Request for Proposals 2015-2016 has been approved.

Brian Taubeneck says the tech guy in Evans School sent the GPSS a tech use survey. He will share it with STF so that they can email departments to decide what proposal they want to send in.

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PACS RECOMMENDATION ABOUT CAPITAL PROJECTS 10:20 am

Alex Bolton says that the PACS came together as a committee and approved wording on the process suggested for using tuition on capital projects. The resolution will be coming including a line, “THAT GPSS endorses PACS Recommendation on the Use of Student Tuition Dollars for Capital Projects” (Refer to the language in PACS proposal). The earlier approach was that the administration needs to take steps in order, which can take up to 6 years, but now it is more to
engage students early on in the process, such as before selecting the architect and before going to the Regent as an information item. When it gets that far much is already decided. Student tuition will have to be the last resort and when it has to be used student governments should have the ability to have an opinion.

**Yasmeen Hussain** questions whether a student advisory council that is constituted only of a dozen students might be a good sampling of student representation.

**Alex Bolton** says that it is to make sure that each school has its budget committee, but by nature of a budgetary committee they are going to be small.

**Brian Taubeneck** says that it is important for the GPSS, the ASUW, and the PACS to educate college councils (CC) on this. For example, Evans CC has two students but he does not think the capital project budget is on their radar.

**Alex Bolton** says that last week Student Regent Vanessa Kritzer and PACS Chair Alice Popejoy hosted a budget training for the active current college council chairs and some members. Some CC are very well established, but many other need work. It is a top priority for the PACS this year.

**Brian Taubeneck** asks if there is any press release in conjunction with it before it goes to the Regents.

**Alex Bolton** says that ASUW is a bit behind on this, and so the GPSS wants to wait for them to vote on this. But they can either send it right away or send it together with the ASUW. The Executive Committee can talk more about it in a following meeting.

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Meeting Adjourned at 10:30 am