GEA Meeting Agenda

Friday, 02 February, 2018

JHB 719 16:00-18:00
Chair: Stephanie Redekop, Vice President

1. Call meeting to order – Stephanie called meeting to order – seconded by everyone
Members in attendance: Asim Rine Reesha, Daniel Bergman, Karl Manis, Alex Sarra-Davis, Chelsea Latremouille, Chris Geary, Billy Johnson, Steph, Sean, Meg
2. Chair proposes motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by everyone.
3. General announcements:
a) We have two upcoming Brown Bag Lunch events. The first is with Professor Chris Warley on Ruskin and the Renaissance and will be held on March 1st, 12-1pm, here in JHB 719. The second is with Professor Bob McGill and some of the MA candidates in creative writing. This will also be held here from 12-1pm in JHB 719, on Monday 12th March.
b) The Staff-Student Relations committee will be hosting the Annual "Cook the Books" event this year at a date yet to be confirmed. This year, the SSRC is planning to hold the traditional literary-themed potluck in JHB 100 before heading out to a pub trivia night at the Duke of York—date will probably be March 18. Faculty will be asked at the door to donate towards graduate student travel, and graduate students may attend for free. All are welcome and are encouraged to join. Prizes will be awarded to the best literary-themed dish, and the top scoring team. We are also looking for people who are willing to bring a dish (with a punny book name) to the potluck. If you are willing to bring food, please email Meg at meg.desmond@mail.utoronto.ca. An email will be circulating about this closer to the date, so keep your eyes peeled for that.
c) Visitor's Day is scheduled for the 23rd of March.
d) The Comprehensive and Fields exams workshop have yet to be scheduled, but will be the first priority of the new president.
4. Reports:
a) Vice President's report:
b) Treasurer's report: thanks to all members esp Daniel for attending the GSU meeting. Next meeting is Feb 26 at 6pm. Daniel will do it again. SSR.
c) Secretary's report: Brown Bag Lunch Creative Writing—first year students will each be reading a ten minute excerpt of their work, this is the first year we’re doing it so it’ll be very exciting. Come out to JHB 719 from 12-1pm on Monday March 12.
d) GSU report:
e) CUPE Stewards' report:
f) MA and MACWR reports: things are cool.
g) PhD1 report: all good
h) PhD2 report:
i) PhD3 report:
j) ABD report:
5. Elections:
President: prospective candidates may now offer to run and voting will commence. (Stephanie Redekop, metting chair and Vice President, will count the ballots. As per IX.2, simple majority with quorum is needed)

Sean nominated himself/unanimous vote for Sean as interim president.

1. New business: discussion of Staff-Student Relations committee statement on sexual harassment and power dynamics:
The SSRC has been hard at work drafting a new working rationale for the committee to allow it to function more smoothly in the future. This has largely been a success, and the members of next year's committee will no doubt benefit from their hard work. There remains however an issue that the committee cannot solve on its own and it is therefore seeking the feedback of the members of the GEA. During discussions, some members have proposed including a statement on the prevalence of sexual harassment and the exploitation of power imbalances within graduate programmes within this working rationale. Such a statement would also comment on how members of the Department can actively avoid (committing, being victim of, or creating the appearance of) such abuse and to help those in potentially abusive situations. While the committee is unanimous that every step should be taken to reduce risk to graduate students, some have questioned whether it is place of the committee, and not the Department / GEA themselves, to be commenting on this aspect of graduate-faculty interaction.

Recommend that the department gives a statement like this—means more coming from the department. Seconded by everyone. Unanimous proposition.

Both would be ideal—maybe something on the GEA website—is it something the GEA is able to do. All three (SSRC, GEA, department) should all proceed with this and do a joint or separate statements. Questions about responsibility need to be answered and answers need to be known widely.

1. New business: constitutional amendment:
Thank you to those members who took the time to vote and voice their concerns re: the GEA's decision to sign on to the petition demanding the termination of Professor Jordan Peterson's appointment at U of T. As no doubt many of you are aware, there currently exists no protocol in the GEA constitution surrounding petitions presented by members, save by the slow and arduous (and, in late December, impossible) process of calling an emergency meeting. That said, item 1.2 of the constitution does require that the GEA "shall represent the interests of its members." The current executive therefore believes that, without a proper and timely mechanism in place for determining members' support for such initiatives in the future, the organisation is not fully equipped to represent the interests of its members. Had the GEA executive failed to act last December, and prevented our members from voting on our collective response, this would have represented a lapse of our charged duties of "[a]ctively respond[ing] to needs, interests, questions, and concerns expressed by the general membership, as well as to issues and events outside the GEA that affect graduate students in English" (Constitution X.1.a). We are therefore proposing that the following amendment be made to the constitution to allow the GEA Executive to employ electronic voting to determine the will of the membership:
"APPENDIX B: GEA EXTRAPARLIAMENTARY VOTING PROCEDURE:

"The Graduate English Association will occasionally need to act in response to external events that impact GEA members at times when it is not possible to call a general meeting. When the proposed action requires a swift response, or a response during the time of year when many students are away from campus and unable to attend an emergency meeting (after the final GEA meeting of either term, or during the Summer term), the GEA executive may conduct an online vote to determine the will of the GEA membership as in any GEA meeting vote requiring simple majority.
"1. Order of Business:
"The vote must proceed in the following manner:
"i) Presentation of the action in question to members via GEA listserv, the GEA Facebook page, and the GEA website
"ii) Consultation period of at least one week where students may voice their concerns in a public forum (GEA Facebook page, GEA website via the secretary for students without Facebook, or who wish to remain anonymous)
"iii) Voting period of at least five days. The voting period may overlap with the consultation period but consultation must occur for at least two days before the start of the voting period.
"iv) Because of the need for swift action, there is no option for amendment of the proposed action once the voting period has begun. The Executive may, however, choose to further stagger the consultation and voting periods so that the proposed motion can incorporate membership input from the consultation period.
"2. Quorum
"At least two Executive officers and at least six general members are required to vote for the poll to attain quorum. If a quorum is not attained, the Executive may extend voting for an additional week.
"3. Motions
"A motion is considered passed if it attains majority consent with quorum.
"4. Voting
"The Executive will employ a mechanism whereby the names of voters are collected to ensure that only members vote and that they only cast one vote each. The vote will be anonymous where deemed necessary by the executive.

Passed unanimously

"5. Amendments and Executive Recall
"Neither amendments to the GEA constitution nor recall of an executive officer or delegate may be made via extra-parliamentary vote.

"6. Adoption
"Should a proposed motion obtain quorum and assent of the majority, the GEA executive may consider that it has the mandate to act in accordance with the motion. The result must be published to the membership via the GEA listserv, GEA website, and GEA Facebook page, and reported officially to members at the next planned GEA meeting."

The motion must be made and seconded. Once it is seconded, debate may begin and amendments may be made. Unless during amendment a member calls to "Move the Previous Question" (cuts off all debate and requires immediate vote) (2/3), "Refer to Committee" (majority), "Postpone" (later in *this* meeting, or later meeting?) (majority), or "Adjourn" (majority, but cannot be made without the consent of the mover—triggers immediate vote otherwise), the chair will then call a vote. The chair must restate the motion in full before voting. The motion requires quorum plus 2/3 vote to pass.

Motion made by Sean, seconded by Meg.

1. Adjournment seconded by everyone