

A Resolution Correcting the Funding Situation of Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees

Authored by Philip Wolgin and ORC members

- WHEREAS the By-Laws of the Graduate Assembly do not currently address the funding needs of Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees;
- WHEREAS the Graduate Assembly created the Foreign Student Affairs Committee (FSAC) and the Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC) without considering their need for funding, inadequately endowing these committees with the resources necessary to complete their goals;
- WHEREAS the issue of committee funding goes beyond FSAC and ESC to all current and future Standing and Ad-Hoc committees;
- WHEREAS standing committees such as the Organization and Rules Committee, the Academic Affairs Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Funding Committee currently receive funding through the “Operations” section of the Executive Office’s budgetary allowance;
- THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the following amendments be made to the By-Laws of the Graduate Assembly, to correct the issue of funding, and to allow *all* current and future committees access to funding. These amendments will be introduced as a new clause in the By-Laws (following clause 12.8.2 and preceding clauses 13).

12.9. Funding of Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees

12.9.1. In the event that a Standing or Ad-Hoc committee requires funds for special events (as opposed to regular operations, meetings and events), the committee may request funding through the Finance Committee, with a budget submitted by March 1 of the preceding academic year.

12.9.2. In the event that a budget cannot be submitted by the March 1 deadline, the committee may only apply for funding from the Finance Committee on an event-by-event basis.

12.9.3. All committee funding requests are subject to review by the Finance Committee. Status as a Standing or Ad-Hoc committee does not guarantee funding from the Graduate Assembly.

Pros and Cons by Sarah Tom
November 29, 2006

Background: The purpose of this resolution is to establish a consistent mechanism to provide event funding for both existing and newly initiated Standing and Ad-Hoc

Committees. Currently, the bylaws do not specify any such mechanism. The resolution applies only to the request of funds for events and does not apply to operations or meetings costs.

Pros:

1. The Finance Committee is charged with creating a budget that accurately reflects the goals of the Graduate Assembly. The budget process takes place in the spring preceding the academic year to which the budget applies. It is fiscally responsible for this budget process to include as many anticipated expenditures as possible such that the Finance Committee, and ultimately the Delegates, may allocate funds in an equitable manner.
2. Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees would have a better idea of their budgets at the start of the academic year, as opposed to waiting for approval for each event during the academic year.

Cons:

1. Requiring Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees to plan up to one year in advance to secure funding may disadvantage the funding of unforeseen events.
 2. Allocating a greater percentage of funds in the spring means that there would be a smaller potential surplus at the start of the academic year. Therefore, newly initiated committees would have fewer funds from which to apply.
-

A Resolution Eliminating Events-Specific Restrictions on Student Group Funding
Authored by Kofi Inkabi and ORC members

- WHEREAS the current budgetary realities and funding practices of the Graduate Assembly are not consistent with clauses 16.7.2 and 16.10.2 of its By-Laws;
- WHEREAS clause 16.7.2 reads: “Graduate Events: This category covers three types of events: (a) regular meetings of a Graduate Student Group; (b) regularly scheduled events such as guest speakers, seminars, or colloquia; and (c) a single special event such as an orientation, conference, organizational session, departmental picnic, or party;”
- WHEREAS clause 16.10.2 reads: “Funding for Graduate Events #1 is limited to three hundred dollars (\$300.00) per Graduate Student Group per semester;”
- WHEREAS the application for Graduate Events I & II funding reads: “Maximum is **\$800 per group, per semester**. (Total includes Grad Events I and Grad Events II combined);”

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the following amendments be made to the Bylaws of the Graduate Assembly, where boldface wording is incorporated only here in this resolution for easy of reading.

*16.7.2. Graduate Events: This category covers **two** types of events: (a) **Graduate Events I that covers** regular meetings of a Graduate Student Group; **and** (b) **Graduate Events II that covers** regularly scheduled events such as guest speakers, seminars, or colloquia and a single special event such as an orientation, conference, organizational session, departmental picnic, or party.*

*16.10.2. Funding for Graduate Events is limited to **eight** hundred dollars (**\$800.00**) per Graduate Student Group per semester.*

Pros and Cons by Charlene Ng and Pete Dillon

Pros: These amendments are in part critical to defining terms in current usage in the GA. Currently the By-Laws impose the stated restriction on a class of graduate events (#1) that are undefined. That is, the terms in usage by the Funding Committee and Graduate Student Groups are “Graduate Events #1” (GE1) and “Graduate Events #2” (GE2) but these are not defined in the By-Laws. Also, these amendments bring the By-Laws into agreement with the current application for Graduate Student Group funding.

Second, some student groups rarely put on events classified under GE2, but still serve a lot of graduate students. A \$300 cap on GE1 for a student group that wanted to serve food (\$5/grad student) only at three meetings in a semester could serve at most 20 graduate

students per meeting through the semester, an arbitrary and needless restriction on a group that could easily generate great value in the graduate student community.

Third, ultimately we are all restricted by the size of the GA's budget. As a matter of providing for 1) greater autonomy to the Funding Committee, 2) fewer restrictions on student groups, and 3) removal of needless red tape these resolutions are a good idea.

Cons: The tightness of the GA's budget is an effective mandate to *tighten our belts*, not to increase liberty in spending. The current restriction on GE1 funding allows for reasonable comfort for groups to meet through the semester. It also provides for some necessary guidelines for the partitioning of a small budget where every dollar needs to be used most effectively.

Second, a restriction of \$300 exists on GE1, but \$800 is the cap on GE1+GE2. Especially for student groups allocated more than \$300 per semester, this creates an incentive for them to reach out to the broader graduate student community in creative ways by offering GE2 events.

Third, this resolution will overturn the September By-Laws amendment of the GA, setting a poor precedent. We do not want to make By-Laws changes and overturn them only months later due either to poorly drafted amendments or to our caprice.

A Resolution 1) Renaming the Graduate Assembly's Current Affirmative Action Policy and 2) Empowering the GA to Hold Associated Parties Accountable to this Policy

Authored by Philip Wolgin and ORC members

- WHEREAS clause 14.2 of the By-Laws currently states “the Graduate Assembly does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, color, ethnicity, age, political persuasion, country of origin, sexual orientation, or disability, and is an affirmative action employer and appointer;”
- WHEREAS although clause 14.2 refers to a policy of affirmative action *and* non-discrimination, the current title for clause 14.2 is “Affirmative Action;”
- WHEREAS the title “Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination” is more fitting the stated policy;
- WHEREAS the Graduate Assembly has a stated policy of affirmative action and non-discrimination, but no power to mandate or enforce compliance by entities receiving its support, financial or otherwise;
- THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the following amendments be made to the By-Laws of the Graduate Assembly, where bold-faced writing is included here only as a point of reference.

14.2. Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination

*14.5.2. At least one (1) notice of opening must be published in the Daily Californian. Such notice must be of reasonable size and specificity, contain opening and closing dates for application, describe how to apply, and indicate the affirmative action **and non-discrimination** policy of the Assembly. Additional notice should be given when possible, including announcements at departmental and Graduate Student Group meetings, before the Assembly, and by sending notices to department offices for posting.*

16.2. Funding Eligibility

*Before a Graduate Student Group can receive funding **it** must:*

*16.2.1. file a Student Organization Registration Form with the Office of Student **Life**. This form must be renewed each semester. [parentheses deleted]*

*16.2.2. file a constitution with the Office of Student **Life**.*

16.2.3. attend a funding workshop and complete and file a Funding Agreement Form with the Graduate Assembly Business Office.

16.2.4. agree to comply with the affirmative action and non-discrimination policy of the Graduate Assembly. The Graduate Assembly reserves the right to revoke funding from any individual, group, or organization not in compliance with its stated affirmative action and non-discrimination policy. The Graduate Assembly also reserves the right to sever all ties with any individual, group, or organization not in compliance with its stated affirmative action and non-discrimination policy.

Pros and Cons by Pete Dillon

Pro: These amendments first remind us of our commitment to a course of affirmative action and non-discrimination as an organization. Passing this resolution would in part provide greater clarity to the language of the By-Laws. It also would provide an essential legal article that first requires up-front commitment by student groups receiving funding to our policy, and second empowers the funding committee to revoke funding from groups that break this commitment.

Con: These amendments could be viewed as unnecessary. Perhaps worse, student groups might feel threatened by the prospect of losing funding, which could result in decreased authenticity of group events and functions.

A Resolution Correcting Inconsistencies in the By-Laws – General
Authored by Philip Wolgin and ORC members

- WHEREAS clause 12.2.8 currently states “Elected Representatives have voting rights on the Executive Board unless they miss three consecutive Executive Board meetings without prior excuse acceptable to the Board, at which;”
- WHEREAS it is **embarrassing** to have a section of our By-Laws end in the middle of a sentence;
- WHEREAS section 12.2.9 states that “In the event that any standing committee has fewer members than the number required for quorum, the Executive Board shall assume the responsibilities of that committee;”
- WHEREAS not all standing committees meet every semester;
- WHEREAS the Executive Board has neither the time nor the resources to be required to assume the responsibilities of all committees not reaching quorum;
- WHEREAS section 10.2.3 of the By-Laws states “At least one Delegate or Alternate from each academic unit represented in the Assembly must serve on at least one standing or ad-hoc committee;”
- WHEREAS according to the President of the Graduate Assembly “the one duty of each delegate is to serve on a committee;”

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the following amendments be made to the By-Laws of the Graduate Assembly, where bold-faced writing is included here only as a point of reference.

*10.2.3. Every **Delegate must serve on at least one of the following: a Graduate Assembly standing committee, a Graduate Assembly ad-hoc committee, or, by assuming the exclusive role of Graduate Assembly representative, a campus committee of the University of California, Berkeley. Alternate Delegates are charged with fulfilling their Delegates’ committee duties as necessary.***

12.2.8. Elected Representatives have voting rights on the Executive Board unless they miss three consecutive Executive Board meetings without prior excuse acceptable to the board. [phrase deleted]

*12.2.9. In the event that any standing **or ad-hoc** committee has fewer members than the number required for quorum, the Executive Board **may** assume the responsibilities of that committee **if it chooses.***

Pros and Cons by Phil Wolgin

Pro

This resolution will correct glaring inconsistencies and errors in the by-laws. As a whole the Graduate Assembly (GA) has pledged to clean up its by-laws, and this resolution is a good way to start. Clause 12.2.8 ends in the middle of a sentence (and a sentence that doesn't seem to have any purpose in the clause to begin with!) There is no reason this clause should not be amended immediately.

This resolution will also begin the process of defining the powers and tasks of the Executive Board. At present the Executive Board is required to assume the responsibilities of any standing committee that does not receive quorum. This puts an undue burden on the Board, and could potentially have a negative effect on their day-to-day activities. By passing this resolution, the GA will give the Executive Board the power to regulate its own agenda, and to focus on those tasks necessary for the operations of the GA.

Finally this resolution will bring the by-laws in line with current GA practices. The GA requires every delegate to sit on a GA or campus-wide committee, and our by-laws need to reflect this. In addition, this resolution will clarify the position of Alternate Delegates and their role on committees. By requiring that Alternate Delegates fill in for absent committee members, the GA improves its chances of obtaining quorum at all committee meetings – a much needed improvement.

Con

While there is no downside to fixing a dangling sentence (12.2.8), this resolution only addresses minor issues in the by-laws. Though the resolution frees the Executive Board of responsibility from assuming committee responsibilities, it does nothing to deal with the greater question of reforming the Board. Furthermore, without oversight, the Executive Board could use this resolution to avoid assuming a committee's responsibilities, possibly harming the operations of the GA.

This resolution requires every delegate to serve on a committee. While this is the de facto current practice, the GA should consider whether they want to make this part of its constitution. This resolution creates no oversight for committee participation, and does nothing to reform the process of committee selection. Furthermore, the resolution would require Delegates and their Alternates to serve on at least one of the same committees.

A Budgetary Amendment to Fund the Lower Sproul Survey

Authored by Josh Daniels and Graduate Student Committee on Lower Sproul members

To amend the 2006-07 Budget to change new line item, “Lower Sproul”, under “Dues & Subscriptions” from \$0 to \$1000. This would fund the Graduate Student Committee on Lower Sproul’s survey of the graduate student body on their opinions on Lower Sproul and its redevelopment. This amount will come from the unused funds from the 2005-06 year.

Pro by Josh Daniels

The Office of Student Research is administering the survey and sending out reminder e-mails. This costs \$750. (The cost of the three iPod Shuffles are approximately \$250.) The benefits of having OSR do this are: (1) all participants will have to login with their Cal ID and password; (2) if the Administration questions the validity of the survey our response is that one of their own -- a professional -- approved it; and (3) the survey will be sent out over the graduate/professional student listserv. There is simply no other way to determine what graduate students actually want when it comes to Lower Sproul. In addition, it creates an effective tool to convince the Administration what graduate students actually want. Without this, the Administration would simply bypass the GA and rely on focus groups that it sets up. Finally, it is important that the GA pay for it because we want to control it. If, for example, the Graduate Division, were to pay for it, they might want to include or exclude something that we don't want. (They have already asked us to include out survey as part of one of their surveys. We said, “No, thank you.”)

Con by Nish Rajan

In our tight budget, we need to look for all possible alternative sources of funding. We could have partnered with the Graduate Division rather than Office of Student Research to have defrayed some or most of the cost. Furthermore, it is unclear what impact, if any, the results of this survey will help guide GA efforts and, more importantly, the Lower Sproul Program Committee. It is further unclear whether graduate students are educated enough on this issue to return useful suggestions.
