FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS



**THIRTY-SECOND CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS**

Assembly Meeting

April 15, 2024

6:30pm

Agenda

**Call to Order:**

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

**Roll Call:**

**Reading and approval of the Minutes:**

**Petitions into the Assembly:**

**Special Introductions and Student Comments:**

*GAU Speakers*

**Messages from Student Government:**

*Madeline King*

**Report from the Office of Governmental Affairs:**

**Report of Officers:**

* Report of the Speaker:

*Stronger Future Framework Resolution*

* Report of the Deputy Speaker for Finance:
* Report of the Deputy Speaker for Communications:
* Report of the Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs:
* Advisor Announcements:

**Committee Introductions and Reports:**

* Internal Affairs:
* Student Advocacy:
* Student Affairs:

**Funding Requests:**

*Bill #35: 2024-25 Annual Budget*

*Bill #36: Grants transfer*

*Bill #37: GWIS funds transfer*

**Unfinished Business:**

**New Business:**

*Call for nominees for the Deputy Speaker of Finance*

*Resolution #3: Commemoration Resolution*

**Round Table:**

**Adjournment:**

Next Meeting: **May 20, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom**

**COGS Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2023-2024**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ACCOUNT** | **ALLOCATION AMOUNT** | **DESCRIPTION** | **BALANCE** |
| UNALLOCATED | $21,318 | For RSO funding requests at COGS meetings | $26,541.30 |
| LSC | $61,000 | Funding allocations from Law School Council to Law School Student Organizations | $1,652.84 |
| MSC | $84,817 | Funding allocations from Medical School Council to Medical School Student Organizations | $6,438.11 |
| PRESENTATION GRANTS (Jul-Oct) | $66,250 | Presentation Grant balance for the July-October funding period | $0 |
| PRESENTATION GRANTS (Nov-Feb) | $75,000 | Presentation Grant balance for the November-February funding period | $0 |
| PRESENTATION GRANTS (Mar-Jun) | $58,750 | Presentation Grant balance for the March-June funding period | $7,135.19 |
| ATTENDANCE GRANTS (Jul-Oct) | $9,000 | Attendance Grant balance for the July-October funding period | $0 |
| ATTENDANCE GRANTS (Nov-Feb) | $9,000 | Attendance Grant balance for the November-February funding period | $0 |
| ATTENDANCE GRANTS (Mar-Jun) | $7,500 | Attendance Grant balance for the March-June funding period | $3,850.18 |

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**The Annual Budget for the 2024 – 2025 Fiscal Year**

**32nd Congress of Graduate Students**

**Bill #:** 35

**Sponsored by:** Deputy Speaker Burns

**Co-sponsored by**: Representative Bethke, Representative Cyrille, Representative Ebuara, Speaker Rowan, Representative Schumm, Representative Siegel, and Representative Velez

**Date:** Monday, April 15, 2024

**Amount:** **$1,247,767**

On March 29th, 2024, the COGS Budget Committee voted to adopt the proposed COGS budget for the 2024 – 2025 Fiscal Year (Attachment #1) and associated proviso language (Attachment #2).

**Purpose & Description:** To provide funding for organizations and programs for July 1st, 2024 through June 30th, 2025.

Attachments:

1. COGS Proposed FY 2024-25 Budget
2. FY 2024-25 Proposed Proviso Language

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**Attachment #2: Proposed Proviso Language, FY 2024-25 COGS Budget**

Section 1: Bangladeshi Student Association

Pursuant to University policy, no funds shall be expended on raw foods that need to be cooked.

Section 2: Ecology & Evolution Research & Discussion Group

Only one (1) iPad may be paid for with these budgeted funds.

Section 3: Southeast Review

Southeast Review shall have a distribution plan where FSU students have the opportunity to receive free copies of the Review.

Section 4: COGS Administration - OPS Wages and Pay Rates

* Speaker: 12 hours per week at the rate of $13 per hour (44 weeks total)
* Deputy Speaker for Finance: 10 hours per week at the rate of $13 per hour (44 weeks total)
* Deputy Speaker for Communications: 10 hours per week at the rate of $13 per hour (44 weeks total)
* Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs: 10 hours per week at the rate of $13 per hour (44 weeks total)

Section 5: COGS Conference Presentation and Attendance Grants:

Notwithstanding conflicting COGS Code, for the 2024-2025 FY, the domestic Presentation Grant shall be $300 and the domestic and international Attendance Grant shall be $180. No later than February 1, 2025, the Speaker shall appoint a committee to study whether to permanently change the grant amounts in the COGS Code, which shall report to the Assembly before final passage of the COGS FY 2025-2026 Budget.

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**Allocation, Revision, or Transfer**

**32nd Congress of Graduate Students**

**Bill #:** 36

**Sponsored by:** Representative Burns

**Date:** April 15, 2024

**Amount:** $10,000

**From (account name):** Unallocated

**To (account name):** Presentation Grants (March – June 2024)

**Purpose & Description:** Transfer funds from the unallocated account to the March – June 2024 presentation grants account.

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**Allocation, Revision, or Transfer**

**32nd Congress of Graduate Students**

**Bill #:** 37

**Sponsored by:** Rowan

**Date:** April 15, 2024

**Amount:** $760

**From (account name):** Graduate Women in STEM Food

**To (account name):** Graduate Women in STEM Expense and Clothing & Awards.

**Purpose & Description:** An internal transfer of the GWIS budget to allow for the purchase of GWIS water bottles, hats, and certificates for the remainder of the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year.

**Itemized Expenditures:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Quantity** | **Description** | **Unit Price** |
| 1 | GWIS Expense for GWIS-branded Water Bottles | (To Be Amended) |
| 1 | GWIS Clothing & Awards for Hats and GWIS Certificates | $760 |

Total: $760

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**Resolution**

**32nd Congress of Graduate Students**

**Resolution #:** 3

**Sponsored by:** Speaker Rowan

**Date:** April 15, 2024

*Whereas* with the end of the Spring and Summer semesters, the Congress will be losing several outstanding Representatives to graduation, and

*Whereas* Susan Rogowski has commendably served the Congress in the roles of Speaker, Deputy Speaker for Finance, and Representative for the College of Arts and Sciences; she has successfully reinvigorated the Congress, ensured that COGS entities are in compliance with COGS Code and Student Body Statutes; she has built up a strong relationship between the Congress and the Graduate School; and she has spent considerable time preparing to defend her doctoral thesis this summer, and

*Whereas* Jorge Galeano-Cabral has dutifully served as the International Student Advocate and a member of the FSU Quality Enhancement Committee; he has been a strong advocate for RSOs to receive funding, particularly for the RSOs at the College of Engineering; he has been a tireless advocate for the interests of our growing international graduate student population; and he has successfully defended his doctoral thesis in late March, 2024, and

*Whereas* Joshua Burns has proudly served as the Deputy Speaker for Finance and Representative for the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences; he has overseen the mammoth task of reimbursing graduate students who previously did not receive their travel grants due to technological issues; he has successfully steered the Congress through a budget process which included a substantial increase in topline spending, and

*Whereas* Chris Cyrille continues to greatly serve as the Representative for the Jim Moran College of Entrepreneurship and as a member of the Budget Committee; he has brought a fresh perspective, informed by his previous entrepreneurial successes; and he will be graduating at the end of the Summer 2024 semester, and

*Whereas* Frank Velez has robustly served as a Representative for the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences; he has strenuously fought to ensure that RSOs have the opportunity to include cooking into their events; he has continued the fight, in spite of the multitude of roadblocks placed in front of him; and he has successfully defended his doctoral thesis during late March, 2024, therefore:

**Be it resolved by the Thirty-First Congress of Graduate Students**: That the Congress gives its heartfelt thanks to Susan Rogowski, Jorge Galeano-Cabral, Joshua Burns, Chris Cyrille, and Frank Velez for their dedication to the betterment of graduate students at FSU, and

**Be it further resolved**: That their work has truly been the embodiment of the spirit of Florida State University, and

**Be it further resolved**: That the Congress wishes them well in their future endeavors and are sure that they will be successful in their ventures, and

**Be it further resolved**: That the Congress will have to work extremely hard to fill the large voids they will leave, and

**Be it finally resolved**: That a physical copy of this resolution be presented to:

Susan Rogowski, COGS Speaker Emeritus,

Jorge Galeano-Cabral, COGS Representative,

Joshua Burns, COGS Deputy Speaker of Finance,

Chris Cyrille, COGS Representative, and

Frank Velez, COGS Representative.

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**Resolution Draft**

**32nd Congress of Graduate Students**

**Resolution #:**

**Sponsored by:**

**Date:**

*Whereas* the structure of the Congress of Graduate Students, and its relationship to the Student Government Association, has been fairly static for the past thirty years, and

*Whereas* the current structure of COGS creates a limbo-like state where graduate students are technically represented by two bodies, but are in fact primarily represented by COGS, and

*Whereas* Florida State University has committed itself to the success of graduate students, as demonstrated by the adoption of the Quality Enhancement Plan, in order to propel FSU into the upper echelons of universities, and

*Whereas*, over the last weeks and months, discussions about a new COGS-SGA relationship have been ongoing between the Speaker and the Student Body President, and

*Whereas* these conversations have reached such a satisfactory point that the initial consent of the Congress of Graduate Students and the Student Senate to a roadmap for discussions surrounding the statutory and constitutional language needed to effectuate the necessary changes to the COGS-SGA relationship is now proper, and

*Whereas* FSU SGA should shift to a quasi-bicameral system, where a fully undergraduate Student Senate maintains the prerogative in matters of legislating, confirming nominees for Student Body office, controlling funds within the Senate’s discretion (with adequate representation for graduate students on the Budget Committee during consideration of the Annual A&S Fee Budget), and making alterations to their Rules of Procedure ,and

*Whereas* COGS should become a constitutionally non-partisan graduate chamber, holding the ability to participate in the legislative process with an opportunity to present and dissent from revisions to Student Body Statutes and Constitutional Amendments (particularly on matters which have an impact on graduate students), confirm Supreme Court justices (with the advice of the Senate Judiciary Committee, should COGS take on the Court’s budget), solely enact changes to the COGS Administrative Code and Internal Rules of Procedure, pass the Annual COGS A&S Fee Budget (with the ability for undergraduate students to provide substantive comment), control funds within the discretion of COGS, ask for advisory opinions, and

*Whereas* the Senate and COGS should have joint powers over resolutions stating the joint opinion of Senate and COGS and, possibly, the confirmation of certain high-ranking Student Body officers, and

*Whereas* each chamber would have independent authority over their officers, Rules of Procedure, the transfer of funds within their discretion, and resolutions that state the opinion of one particular chamber, therefore:

**Be it resolved by the Thirty-Second Congress of Graduate Students**: That COGS agrees, in principle, to the framework set out in this resolution for a Stronger Future in the COGS-SGA relationship, and

**Be it further resolved**: That COGS requests the agreement of the Student Senate in this Stronger Future Framework prior to the end of the Spring Senate Session, and

**Be it further resolved**: That COGS asks the Student Senate to agree to a timeline for the implementation of this framework where an unofficial working group would draft and finalize the necessary constitutional and statutory changes necessary to effectuate the Stronger Future Framework (while consulting with Senators, Representatives, the Executive Branch, and our University partners), reporting back to COGS and the Senate with the proposed constitutional amendment and statutory revisions by the end of the first week of the Fall 2024 semester, and that COGS and Senate agree to the constitutional amendment within the time necessary to ensure that the amendment is on the Fall 2024 SGA ballot, and

**Be it further resolved**: That COGS offers that the working group include, at a minimum, the Speaker of COGS, two members of COGS (as decided by the Speaker), two senators (as decided by the Senate President), and a representative of the Student Body President, as well as any other persons deemed necessary by the group, and

**Be it further resolved**: That the Speaker, under Chapter 607 of Student Body Statutes, is ordered to appear before the Student Senate at the first available opportunity to read this resolution into their record and to advocate for the passage of a resolution agreeing to the Stronger Future Framework, and

**Be it finally resolved**: That a copy of this resolution be sent to:

Jackson Boisvert, Student Body President,

Joseph Cofer, Student Senate President,

Jason Gorelick, Student Senate President Pro-Tempore, and

The Members of the 76th Student Senate.

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS



**THIRTY-SECOND CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS**

Assembly Meeting

April 1, 2024

6:30pm

Minutes

**Call to Order:** 6:35pm

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Strickland

**Roll Call:**

**Present:** Balak, Balogun, Barber, Bethke, Burns, Delva, Ebuara, Galeano, Hussain, McCraney, Medarev, Nord, Pakdehi, Rogowski, Rowan, Schumm, Solmaz, Stickland, Vaughn, Velez, Wardlow, Wheeler

**Absent Excused:** Alleyne, Cyrille, Siegel, Wesner

**Reading and approval of the Minutes:** Burns, 2nd- Balogun

**Petitions into the Assembly:**

Diego Fermin - Social Sciences and Public Policy Seat 3

Good evening. I have been in higher education for 7 years and I love FSU so much that I stayed for my Masters. The reason I am here is that the success of COGS leads to my success as a person and professional. Those in my department like Ph.D. students don't have a voice and they don't have the time and I want to help them. They want to be involved, but they can't. They are constantly in the field and deserve a voice. I want to get involved and be a part in the University community. I also work full time and this is a great way to get connected again.

Q&A:

Wheeler - Do you know what committee you would like to serve on? Budget or internal affairs.

Bethke - Will you be available at this time every week and how long would you be able to stay? I am and I would like to stay until I graduate.

Burns - Are you taking classes over the summer to be a part of COGS? Yes.

Rowan - Are you financially certified? In progress.

Pros:

Pakdehi - I think he was very motivated.

Burns - We just wrapped up on budget week, but it's good to know for next year.

Strickland - He seems very enthusiastic.

Solmaz - It's nice to have more Masters students.

Hussain - He seems interested in numbers and budget, and maybe he might be interested in Josh's role.

Rowan - I am going to abstain because of bias.

Bethke - call to question; 2nd - Schumm

Vote: 21-0-1

Swearing into office.

**Special Introductions and Student Comments:**

Dr. Leventhal - Graduate Student Resource Center

Rowan: Introduced Dr. Emily Leventhal, Director of the new Graduate Student Research Center.

Dr. Levental: Today will be an overview of the new Graduate Student Research Center. It stems from the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

Dr. Leventhal: Focus on academic engagement, teaching preparation, and career readiness. Research and Creativity Grants will support conference travel,alongside the COGS grants. In collaboration with other campus partners (CAT, Career Center, etc.)

Dr. Leventhal: Current status of GSRC: Only the currency staff member but more will be hired. Office is in the Honors, Scholars, and Fellows House (HSF) on the fourth floor.

Dr. Leventhal: The GSRC website has been launched, which includes information about COGS on it.

Dr. Leventhal: Research & Creative Activity Travel Grants are addressing the unequal funding that students get for conference travel. The grants are $1,000 a piece. Currently, 1,300 students are in candidacy and eligible. Have to take a workshop from University libraries. Proof of application. Utilized other sources of funding. Can be used for all expenses that FSU already approves. Can be used for regional, national, and international travel. One grant per student, per year. In the future, the eligibility and considerations for approval will be further developed. Will not hit financial aid.

Dr. Leventhal: Partner initiatives include University library workshops on three topics relevant to applicants. The Career Center will offer two workshops for career preparation. Quinnicia is a tool for interview skills. An important area for graduate students to consider. The career center has hired someone, a liaison, specifically for graduate students. Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT) has a teaching development program that goes beyond the basics and helps with teaching preparation, beyond just preparing to be a teaching assistant. These workshops will make you eligible for the grant.

Dr. Leventhal: Resource fair will be done in a way that is coordinated with existing partners and events so that there is higher engagement.

Dr. Leventhal: GSRC communication includes the email: gsrc@fsu.edu

Strickland: Ask clarifying questions on the use of Quinnicia and the way the tracking system is used.

Dr. Leventhal: Quinnicia has its own tracking system for feedback on interview performance.

Hussain: Looking on the website, there are connections to the CGE. The current career fairs are catered towards undergraduate students. Is there a way the office will work with the career center so that employers will be willing to talk with and hire graduate students, instead of just undergraduate students.

Dr. Leventhal: That is my hope. One of the reasons why the center hired a graduate student liaison is to address this issue, where many services are centered on undergraduate students. There is plenty of potential to make these events for graduate students as well.

Solmaz: One of the biggest frustrations is that there are funding opportunities for graduate students, but only for domestic graduate students and not for international students. Are there future plans to include eligible funding opportunities for international students?

Dr. Leventhal: Work to include a filtering system that will address this issue.

Solmaz: Are there plans to include resources about certification programs for PhD students, some that are important for career?

Dr. Leventhal: Yes, we can work with the library on that.

Ebuara: Question on the eligibility for the grant. Do you need to get departmental and COGS funding to get the grant?

Dr. Leventhal: You must show that you have applied for both, but not necessarily have received them. The outcome of the two is not dependent on the application. Still have to talk with business administrators on tracking what students have received from COGS and departments.

Rogowski: Issues with accessing career resources on the career website.

Leventhal: Will work on that.

Delva: Issue of collaboration between different disciplines and departments for funding?

Leventhal: Ongoing conversations about this issue. The GSRC can serve as a connection and liaison for students to get connected with the appropriate partners for these opportunities. Plans on resources and opportunities for training on teams between disciplines.

Rowan: Comments on suggestions for communication.

Burns: Instagram page specifically for the resource center:

Strickland: LinkedIn and LinkedIn Learning as a resource

Balogun: Question related to progression through program and graduate school. Related to timing.

Leventhal: One of the QEP initiatives is the Grad File. It checks off things you have done across your graduate journey (candidacy, exams, etc.). Allows your department to customize milestones you accomplish throughout your journey. Monitor how you are doing

Galeano: Biology department has the tracking system currently. This tracking system would be replicated. Easy way to track these milestones.

Ebuara: Clarification on the topic at hand.

Galeano: Current processes can be vague. Forms are not sufficient in figuring out what still needs to be completed.

Ebuara: Even if you knew the next steps, what happens if you don’t complete the steps in time?

Leventhal: Offers a check and balance on tracking milestones. This new system provides more agency. Only four and five departments use this new system. Rollout across five years.

Pakdehi: Is it helpful to connect with the executive boards and officers of RSOs to do outreach on these opportunities?

Leventhal: Yes!

Solmaz: Excitement from graduate students they know.

Leventhal: Wants to continue building workshops and initiatives that are things that graduate students want and need.

**Messages from Student Government:** N/A

**Report from the Office of Governmental Affairs:** N/A

**Report of Officers:**

* Report of the Speaker: Please make sure to attend committee meetings and student advocacy has had issues with hitting quorum.

Budget night is April 15, it’s also our last meeting of Spring. Please be there, we’ll have a few other pieces of business. Budget does have some amendments.

COGS Exec will be presenting to Senate on April 10th at 7:30pm about the great work of COGS. Please come out!

* Report of the Deputy Speaker for Finance: Updated report is in the agenda. Grants are in a good state. Finished budget week and a lot of work went into that. Thanks to the committee for their hard work and time. The budget will be posted on the website tomorrow morning. Please look at this before the meeting on April 15th and come ready. We will also have elections on that day for the Deputy Speaker of Finance role. If you are interested in the role, please let me know. I encourage you to think of it if you are taking summer classes.
* Report of the Deputy Speaker for Communications: Bowling April 12th 5pm-9pm; Will be opening the form for summer leave of absence/fall returning or not; T-shirts being in process; Once we have our food truck plans, please promote those.
* Report of the Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs: Nothing
* Advisor Announcements: Congrats on the budget committee.

**Committee Introductions and Reports:**

* Internal Affairs: We did not meet last week due to everyone being busy. Thank you to those who came to our retreat the weekend before last.
* Student Advocacy: Did not have quorum on the 25th. We hope to meet next Monday
* Student Affairs: Discussed trying to get some events going, but we are going to drop one event that Frank had been working on. Otherwise, we have a t-shirt design and the upcoming events coming up.

**Funding Requests:**

*Bill #31: Mechanical Engineering Graduate Student Association*

MEGSA wants to promote interactions with graduate students in their department. They are having a poster event. Previously they had 65 participants and 13 presenters. They want to repeat this again this year. The funds are going toward awards and food. It helps to build skills and connections.

Q&A:

Bethke - How many awards are being ordered? 3 awards are being given out.

Pros:

Pakdehi - It's a great idea to have those types of presentation events so that people can practice for bigger conferences. It can also motivate people to make presentations.

Rogowski - I think it's a great event and the fact that it is student led makes it a safe space. The awards is great because it's something students can put on their resume.

Galeano - I participated in the previous one and it was an amazing event. They even got faculty involved which was great. MEGSA has put together many amazing events and they get funding from various sources. Happy to see them here.

Rowan - The price of the award is large, but we do have the money to give them.

Con:

Burns - call to question; 2nd - Solmaz

Closing: I think this is a great initiative and inspired me to introduce it to my department as well. We should support these efforts.

Rogowski - Point of information, this might be more than the allowed award amount and might need to be approved by the Senate Finance Committee.

Bethke - Motion to reconsider the motion to call the question; 2nd - Solmaz.

Burns - withdraws the motion to call to question.

Bethke - Motion to amend the award line to $225. 2nd - Solmaz.

Bethke - This is so that we are in line with the maximum amount per award.

Amendment is adopted.

Rogowski - Call to question; Schumm - 2nd

Vote: 21-0-2

*Bill #32: Bangladeshi Student Association*

Bangladeshi is requesting money for a soccer tournament in June. It is a way to bond with soccer players. It is commonly done in Bangladesh. Encourages networking and health and wellness. Org has 91 members and the tournament will be held off campus. Expected around 100 people attending. Tournament will have 4 teams and the winners will get prizes and there will be food after.

Q&A:

Pakdehi - doesn't FSU have a place for this event? For the participants, some are spouses and can't play on the FSU fields. If you make a list, they can join on campus.

Balogun - How would you show COGS's sponsorship? The cogs logo will be on the awards.

Rogowski - Who are you using for the awards? Awards4U.

Pros:

Pakdehi - I am into this event because it is a sports event and it's fun to take part in.

Nord - It's a wellness event that lets students go out and get exercise.

Cons:

Call to question - Schumm; Pakdehi - 2nd

Closing: Pass

Vote: 20-0-2

*Bill #33: MAAPPA*

Bill to give this organization money for a banner. This will be good for them to have for events and promotion.

Q&A:

Pros:

Rowan - They talked about this in their budget request and this is to help celebrate graduating students. They are also requesting a more general use banner for next year's budget.

Cons:

Call to question - Schumm; 2nd - Hussain

Vote: 21-0-1

**Unfinished Business:**

**New Business:**

*Resolution #2: Bangladeshi Student Association*

Off campus events must be approved by COGS. Seeking a waiver so that they can hold their soccer event off campus.

Q&A: none

Pro: none

Con:

Call to question - Wheeler; 2nd - Rogowski

Vote: 21-0-1

**Round Table:**

**Adjournment:** 8:07pm

Next Meeting: **April 15, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. Senate Chambers (3rd floor Student Union)**