



## Vice President of External Affairs September Report

### Legislative Update

- **State Budget**
  - There continue to be indications that the higher education budget might still be in danger in the next Legislative session.
- **Republican Primary/Debate**
  - In exchange for not moving the date of the Arizona Presidential Preference Primary, Arizona has been given the opportunity to host a Republican debate.
- **Poly and West Split**
  - Senators Linda Grey (R-Phoenix) and Andy Biggs (R-Mesa) have discussed introducing legislation that would split the West and Polytechnic campuses off into their own Universities. Both the undergraduate student governments at West and Poly oppose this measure and have been working closely with these legislators to address the issues that have led to this. GPSA is hoping to become a part of those discussions. All students, though particularly Poly and West grads, are greatly encouraged to contact EA and get involved.

### Arizona Students' Association (ASA)

- **Legislative Affairs Committee**
  - I am the Chair of the Leg. Affairs committee for the year. In this capacity, I have met with Rep. Forese twice about possible textbook legislation. Additionally, the Legislative Affairs Policy Priorities, which outline the goals of this committee for the year, was passed at the most recent ASA Board Meeting. This document is attached here.
- **Graduate Student Committee**
  - Johan Bodaski, NAU Graduate Student Government (GSG) President has taken over as chair of this committee. We look forward to a productive year. Any interested student can join this committee.
- **Conference of Arizona Student Leaders**
  - This conference, hosted by ASA, is both leadership training and a leadership summit. It will be held October 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> at NAU. Graduate students are welcome to attend. GPSA Executives Matt Savage, Hannah Reitzel Rivera, Megan Fisk, German Cadenas, and I will be trainers at this event.

### Arizona Board of Regents

- **Financial Aid Reform Task Force**
  - On Wed. Sept. 21, I served as the ASU representative to the ABOR Financial Aid Task Force. This is an exciting opportunity to have students be more involved in innovative reforms. Different suggestions

that have been made to date are a portable tuition/grant/voucher system, loan forgiveness, and changing the current standards of financial aid (performance-based, need-linked). There is also interest in discussing how to improve the actual service and delivery of financial aid. If you have ideas and/or are interested in getting involved, please contact me.

- **Regents**

- Jay Heiler, an ASU alum, founder and chairman of the Board of the Great Hearts Academies, and a huge charter schools advocate, has been named by Gov. Brewer as her replacement for current ABOR Chair Fred Duval whose term is up in January. Gov. Brewer must also name replacements for (or re-appoint) Bob McClendon and Ernest Calderón.
- NAU is working on the selection process for choosing candidates for the next student regent. Additionally, ASA and NAU reps have met with staff from the Governor's Office to try to ensure that the Student Regent is chosen from these candidates (as this process was bypassed last year in the ASU selection process).

### **Graduate Student Loans**

- I met with Craig Fennell, Director of Student Financial Assistance, to discuss the ABOR Financial Aid Task Force and we also discussed issues with graduate student loans. Craig is a member of the National Association of Student Aid Administrators' (NASFAA) Graduate and Professional subcommittee which is meeting this weekend. Topics that may be covered are working to lower the Stafford Loan Interest Rate because of the removal of the in-school interest subsidy as well as consolidating the numerous loan programs.

### **Gradvocacy SUN**

- Director of Graduate Student Advocacy German Cadenas has been hard at work trying to establish a core advocacy base through the Gradvocacy Student Unity Network (SUN). He outreached to leaders of graduate student organizations and planned a kick-off event for 9/14. Despite 40 RSVPs, there was low attendance at the event, which also included a presentation by ASA. German is currently looking at other innovative ways to engage students, including utilizing Wiggio. Please consider getting involved and advertising this program to constituents and friends.

### **Grads Go Gold: Service in the Community**

- Despite announcements in GradStu and via social media, we didn't have a great turnout in our Food Drive. About two boxes were collected from Tempe and West (unfortunately no food was donated at Downtown or Poly).

- We are also encouraging students to do community service in ASU apparel and then post pictures to our Facebook page. So far, we don't have any entries. PLEASE encourage your constituents and friends to participate.

### **The PhD Movie**

- We have officially scheduled a viewing of the PhD movie for Friday, October 21 at 5 PM in Neeb Hall. Seating is first come, first serve. Please RSVP on our Facebook event page (<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=260375530662377>) and pass along the news to your friends!

Respectfully,

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Graduate and Professional Student Association  
Arizona State University