

SASgov GB minutes 11/29:

- Exec Updates
 - Policy
 - 2019 SASgov Town Hall
 - **Date:** January 23rd
 - **Time:** 6-8 PM
 - **Location:** Ben Franklin Room (Houston Hall 218)
 - SASgov Divestment Resolution (Clay, Physics & Astronomy)
 - If we have ideas or contributions at SAS, send them along to the policy committee for SAS as well.
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 - Social
 - Escape room competition at Liberty Escape Room (325 Cherry St. Philadelphia, PA 19106)
 - Inter-school competition, 8 spots per school, Tickets required at five dollars apiece
 - Sunday, Dec 2, 5 pm
 - Competition among schools
 - Each school may send eight students to compete
 - At end the winning school will be declared
 - Spots for SAS - other schools have already been publicizing, so we're encouraged extra to send out information to our departments.
 - Thursday Dec 6th, Happy Hour at Bernie's after the GB meeting
 - Open to the whole SAS community!
 - Happy hour is free!
 - Sunday Dec 9th, Ice Skating at Dilworth Park (City Hall)
 - From 3pm to 5pm
 - SAS students will have free access and rental to skates!
 - Public Affairs
 - Fliers for Grad BenTalks (Feb. 22nd)

- Contacting potential judges
 - email template will come after confirming yes/no for current possible judges
 - Brianna will contact professors previously contacted last year, once she receives word from those professors she will request nominations for her outreach from SAS GB members.
- Reminder to check the email from Ralph Rosen about Grad Ben Talks, please encourage department members to discuss or attend
- Brianna is also sending around a sheet so that we may write in where our departments are housed so that SAS may send fliers directly to apartments.
- Finance Updates:
 - Budget update: \$9,144.18 increase
 - Will have an updated budget by the start of the spring semester for GB to review.
- Financial Operations Updates
 - 35 Travel Grants Funded out of 52 (67%)!
 - ~\$20144 ***if they all claim the funding***
 - Focused on presenters, not attendees
 - Reminder to make clear to our departments that presenting (posters) is encouraged
 - \$350 of Discretionary Funding Officially approved so far.
 - 2 new applications received this week, committee needs to meet! Will set up a time for the committee to meet after GB tonight.
 - Biology received external funding, so this frees up \$\$\$ for us, around \$1500
 - Can be put towards applications now or in the spring, decision will be made by finance committee.
 - Committee: Please attend meetings. How can we incentivize this? They need bodies in the room to be able to make decisions on who receives money.
 - SASGov travel grant decisions have been made. If you haven't heard back yet, you will hear back soon.

- Communications:
 - Reminder - you can only proxy for one person per meeting
- GAPSA Updates
 - Research council:
 - Through reviewing major grants given to research council, sometimes professors write very bad recommendation letters.
 - RC is wondering if they should push university to have workshop on how to write letters of recommendation?
 - Do we think it's a good idea? (resounding yes)
 - PhD workshop on how to write letters ourselves
 - GAPSA research travel grants will happen in next five days
 - Applications have been strong this semester, are getting tips on how to write great applications.
 - What they want to get out is that if there are people who have been funded in the past, don't assume you'll get money again, make sure you work diligently on them.
 - Research Council: reminder that they are a council for research students (not a council that does research)
 - If you have already spoken to Rawad about travel grants, if you have opinions or suggestions, send them to Rawad or to anyone on the E Board. The application is 4 years old and is in need of updating.
 - Discretionary Applications
 - Suspend Rules, Adopt the Following:
 - 3 Minutes to Present, 2 Minutes Q&A, Finance Recommendation, 2 Minutes Discussion, Vote by GB, Decision is announced
 - *Medievalists @ Penn Working Group*
 - Eleventh annual graduate conference, which will take place on 2/22 in the Kislack Center on the 6th floor of VP
 - Will feature three graduate student papers, a panel with faculty, networking opportunities including a catered lunch and reception. To foster discussion among scholars among all aspects of the middle ages, to introduce interdisciplinary understanding of medieval culture.
 - Target audience is Penn graduate students throughout Humanities.
 - 55-65 participants expected
 - Have already received pledges of 2K from other departments. Departments supporting also show

interdisciplinary push.

- Asking for 2000 for a total budget of just over 5400.
- Want to create cross disciplinary collaboration. Students will get immediate feedback from faculty respondents.
- Manuscript workshop to integrate rare books at Penn and to expose their collection.
- All benefits are open to all SAS community.
- Advertisement will be posters throughout departments and will also be in almanac...
- Q: What are some things you learned from last year's conference to increase attendance?
 - Trying to make it interesting to a wide range of scholars. So widening the scope of what will be discussed and the attendees.
 - One thing last year that happened that a not-related person began attending meetings regularly after attending the conference.
 - Added workshop to raise awareness about collection.
 - Most students don't know about, M@P wants to incentivize students to work with it.

■ Discussion

- Committee met and discussed, and recommended to GB a value of 500 of 2k.
- Pros and Cons:
 - Great that they are spreading awareness, fostering discussion. Multiple programs that involves multiple other programs and other areas of the humanities (though all of SAS is able to attend). Also like that the attendance size is big.
 - SASGov usually prefers to fund more lasting programs, rather than one-off events. A committee member thought that the catering request was too high at \$630, although that would come out to less than \$10 per person.
- Committee believed that \$500 for the honorarium and poster charges.
- But! Funding was just made available.
- Since this is a conference, the food budget is not unreasonable. Were this for a reading group, it could be a question. Here it is justified.
- They also mentioned that this is the eleventh conference. It is an institution here at Penn, and it has a great reputation in part because of this conference. If we funded more, we

would be contributing to something that makes the school so successful.

- Do we know what the rest of the funding they have already received will be used for? Assuming things other than what they let us know. They didn't submit a whole budget of expenses, only requested expenses (reminder that we should submit complete budgets, not just requested expenses). With funding request to GAPSA, they did submit a whole budget. Rawad or Ida can forward to finance committee.
- Do we know how much money they received last year?
- Last year, SASGov funded for \$1k. We do not know how much they requested.
- Voting 1k makes sense, is in line with what we have contributed in the past, and is similar to GAPSA's contribution.
- Motion to extend by 2 minutes, seconded, passed
- What is the remaining budget? Ideally we should be voting on the merit, rather than thinking about how much money is left in the pot. The EB will worry more about moving money around.
- Motion to increase to \$1k, seconded. First vote on requested: fails; second vote on motion for 1k: passes;
- *claps*
- Resolution
 - Endorsing the Campaign to Divest University of Pennsylvania's Endowment from the Top 200 Fossil Fuel Companies
 - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CvhkwGCptDakeJBo3iwURatCMIluqQSmTw_caeMosoc/edit
 - Resolution was sent to us yesterday with reminder email. Clay and Amy who will discuss
 - Clay: Joined Fossil Free Penn, heard about it through the DP. Largely undergraduates who have been working for last 4 years to encourage the trustees to stop putting money into fossil fuel companies in the US.
 - Amy Goldfisher: coordinator for FFP
 - FFP campaigns to get UPENN to divest from top fossil fuel companies, part of a global movement that students are engaging in.

- Tool to stigmatize fossil fuels - when big institutions make such statements, the rest of the world follows.
- Major arguments: Financial!
 - End up with stranded assets, more financially secure to divest
 - Moral imperative of divesting with climate change and climate change denial. Social imperative, role of fossil fuel industry in perpetuating environmental racism. Justice issue as well.
 - Recently, undergraduate assembly endorsed FFP's goals, so they are bringing it to us.
- Has been going on for 4 years, what is the tangible ground they've made in that process?
 - Knew that it would be a tough battle from the start, Penn is notoriously slow to make changes
 - Has been a lot of change in that the student body, faculty, community has really become more aware of the issue. They have been able to grow a community here to train new environmental leaders.
- Discussion within GB to see if people want to move to vote to support.
 - Clay is part of policy committee, he brought it to our attention and has the support of the Policy Committee and VP of Policy. Wants to remind the GB that this is an endorsement. Also means that you're more than welcome to join the cause if you feel so compelled.
 - If it is passed, the resolution will go onto our website as an official statement (or endorsement) from SASGov.
 - Also would mean something tangible to the UA, who has

endorsed already.

- What else will happen? It will be passed along to the university deans, etc. It will not just go on the website, but also be a communication to the administration.
- Do we agree with overall idea but have things you would like to alter? We can suggest edits and amendments to the resolution.
- What percentage of the university's endowment is through FF? FFP can estimate based on similar portfolios. They estimate between 3-4%, a significant chunk of money.
- We wonder if we can find out the big companies that they're invested in, what are the ones that we want to compel them to divest from? The university won't tell us. It's a possibility that they aren't invested? It's unlikely, since most portfolios are. They did try a more specific focus to demand divestment with coal and tar sand, was met with rejection. Focusing more intensely on coal and tar sand divestment, but total divestment is the goal.
- Does it make the resolution stronger if we add the sources and numbers we have so far, more detail?
 - Do we want this as an amendment?
 - What's the extent of the information we can include?
- Should we instead encourage the university to invest in clean energy, since we are less likely to get them to divulge any of their investments?
- Friendly amendments are only accepted at this time, but big overhauls would be new resolutions brought to another meeting.
- Also, reinvestment is included on the resolution.

- What we are doing as a body is not designing policy with long term consequences, but rather supporting or not divestment. If we vote this down, we say we don't support divestment at Penn. This is about supporting a movement or not.
- If we were to divest, how much would it alter our endowment? Programs that undergo budget cuts are those that are in SAS, represented in this room.
 - Looking at all the portfolios that have been divested and the total amount of money that has been divested is in the trillions. They are all doing as well or better than they were before. Not economically harmful to us right now.
- Columbia and Stanford, who have comparable endowments, have partially divested. Stanford from thermal coal and Columbia from companies that contributed to climate change denial.
- Moral imperative: going back to Andrea's point - making sure that we are publishing something that has information to back up the claims of the resolution. Claire can add citations, references, etc.
- Can we vote pending the addition of sources?
- One idea is to table now so that FFP can add more details or numbers to bolster resolution (amending). Another idea where we are okay with voting as is. Third option is rejecting.
- Motion to table and amend, seconded, passes.
 - Add in citations.
 - Expanding language on reinvestment.
 - Say what assets or recommend other assets based on

evidence? Wait - recommending assets is a bad idea because we are not financial advisors. Provide statistics or information instead.

- Announcements

- There was a representative who wanted to make an announcement?
- Claire:
 - Political science department - fees you have to pay when you finish your program (including dissertation abroad for \$300, dissertation deposit of \$50....)
 - Their department doesn't cover these fees, other departments may not either.
 - So... how many departments cover these fees, and by how much?
 - Can we do a survey to see what that looks like, and help other departments request these fees covered, especially as they hit you at the end of your time at Penn? Many students are not made aware of this!
 - Can Claire send us a google form?
 - Rawad feels that it falls into the realm of policy related issues, wants to facilitate fact-finding mission
 - Ida doesn't think it is complicated - we have reps in almost every department. Since this is not gathering opinion, it's something that the GB members should figure out.
- Asminet: please, if you are assigned to a committee, please be sure to fulfill obligations. If you're not fulfilling your responsibility, you may be shuffled around.

- Committees