

Mr. Taylor W. Bailey: President, Purdue Graduate Student Government
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Response to Prof. Steve Landry E-mail "RE: 18-02"

I offer the following in response to discussion at the October University Senate Meeting. I am a co-author of the GSBoRR and the individual who has headed this project within PGSG for the past 2 and a half years. I believe that my intentions and due diligence have been poorly addressed and are immediately relevant to the discussion. I ask that your conversations with faculty colleagues acknowledge my perspectives and intention for the GSBoRR, and I happily welcome any questions or opportunities to discuss this project with anyone.

1. It is true that not all of the original concerns were addressed. I believe my position is well described in my earlier response, shared with SAC but not forwarded to the full senate.
2. An extension of the logic of this argument is, for example, that almost all resolutions that come from the University Senate have no value as the University Senate does not have the authority to create policy outside of a narrow scope. It was expressed in the October Senate meeting multiple times how important it is for the University Senate to have a voice—how is this any different than the Purdue Graduate Student Government setting an aspirational document (read: "resolution")?

The discussion of Prof. Landry ignores what my intention has been. Rights exist philosophically in absence of codification by policy, and we assert that these are rights and responsibilities that describe a positive and productive graduate student experience. We are absolutely within appropriate bounds to create such a document and distribute it. I believe the inclusion of faculty in this process is important recognition that faculty are an unalienable part of the culture of graduate education, but we are not asking for permission or elevation of the status of the GSBoRR. We are asking you to validate that these are important considerations for graduate students as they progress through their experience.

The only and unequivocal nature of the PGSG request for "endorsement" is to answer the question: do you agree with us?

I find no other way to interpret the statement that endorsement of this document "will have no effect other than to salve the conscience of those who are the source of the graduate student concerns" than an admission that faculty are the problem. That has *never* been my personal narrative nor motivation to see this project through. The purpose of the GSBoRR is to inform and empower graduate students to recognize when they should consider advocating for themselves; it is not a set of rule to be dictated to faculty and staff. To that end, while I acknowledge the utility of a policy document, the GSBoRR serves its purpose as an aspirational document. I invite further discussion on how to approach a policy document, but it has already taken over 3 years to progress this project this far. To avoid acknowledging the current GSBoRR as presented does nothing to improve the self-efficacy of graduate students as self-advocates.

It is a statement of fact that there are graduate students currently in abusive relationships with their major professors. Students cannot advocate for themselves if they are unaware of how

recognize unproductive or abusive circumstances. That is the fundamental purpose of the GSBoRR. I invite everyone to review the "Purdue University Bill of Student Rights". I have never described this as an "undergraduate focused" document; it pertains to and describes the functional relationship of all students with the University. It does not, however, illustrate the graduate student experience. PGSG acknowledges the various points of content and thematic overlap with the three documents referenced in 18-02, but I assert that the GSBoRR is a non-redundant extension as a document from graduate students to inform and empower graduate students.

To the point of graduate staff pay:

There are departments who responded to discussion within Graduate Council by setting an agenda and timeline to review graduate staff pay internally. The Graduate School will also be evaluating the topic of graduate staff pay with a task force over the coming year. The point as presented by Prof. Landry is moot.

3. I have no comment as to the responsibility of Senators to communicate.

To the insinuation of "sneaking", I reiterate my personal effort to communicate with the Senate, Graduate Council, and relevant University administrators throughout this process.

As of the date my letter and the GSBoRR was distributed to students and faculty, the GSBoRR had been reviewed by the Board of Trustees, President, Provost, Vice Provost for Student Life, Dean of Students, Associate Dean of Students for Student Rights and Responsibilities, and Deputy General Counsel. Endorsement of the GSBoRR was not requested in any case, but the project and its intent were validated in every case.

I personally presented to the Graduate Council two times and participated in multiple discussions with Council members about the project. I cannot speak to communication between Council members and their constituents in general, but I would like to recognize faculty from the College of Engineering who proactively engaged graduate program administrators within their college to discuss the GSBoRR as a positive example.

The GSBoRR was brought to the Student Affairs Committee by PGSG. Prof. Sanders is the third Chair of SAC during my tenure with PGSG with whom I have discussed this project; I have attended multiple SAC meetings in the past years. A member of the PGSG Executive Board attended a Faculty Affairs Committee meeting to discuss the GSBoRR prior to the original Senate vote on 18-02. An earlier version of the GSBoRR was shared with the Equity and Diversity Committee when I served as the graduate student representative the year prior. I personally presented on the Senate floor about the GSBoRR the month that 18-02 was on the Agenda for Information; at this time the immediate-past version of the GSBoRR was made available to the Senate.

I received, at many stages, various feedback from faculty members. There have been criticisms and suggestions, some of which resulted in changes in the GSBoRR. Ultimately, the GSBoRR is a PGSG document. I invite everyone to offer support for 18-02 in the spirit of validating our message to students that these are important considerations as graduate students, and more generally, that graduate student well-being matters.