

Graduate Student Employment Committee (GSEC)

Minutes of May 4, 2018 meeting

Present – Student: Carver, DuBose, Elkind, Faith, Henderson, Mobley, Lingo, White.
Faculty/Admin: Tranel.

Absent – Student: Kelly; Faculty/Admin: Thaggert.

Ex Officio present – Faculty/Admin: Keller, Welter; Student: Jerkovich, Sharma.

Guest – Faculty/Admin: Danger, Stange.

The meeting was called to order by Dean John Keller @ 9:30 AM.

1. Minutes from the April 20, 2018, meeting were approved unanimously.
2. Housing report discussion – Aspire manages the property on UI land where Hawkeye Apartments used to stand. Aspire is a non-UI entity although the Operational Committee includes UI administrators. A Tenant Advisory Group has recently been started. Regarding affordability of housing for graduate students Stange noted shifting in populations and demands since the Housing Report dated August 1, 2016. Vacancy rates in Iowa City and Coralville were less than 2% between 2010 and 2016, which allowed the landlords to control the market. Current prospective analysis indicates the market will organically will reduce rental rates due to new construction in Iowa City and Coralville and a smaller first year class size. The enrollment trends for undergraduates has peaked while additional undergraduate residence hall rooms have become available with the opening of Catlett in fall 2017.

Contract language with Aspire noted the first phase of construction was to be at or slightly above average market rates for similar construction to University of Iowa graduate and professional students. Their *pro forma* provided for 2.5-3.0% annual aggregate increase. Their second phase of construction has enhanced amenities and choices and are at a higher monthly rental rate. Stange commented that priority in Aspire is given to graduate students and families. The University representatives on the committee have worked with the Aspire staff to ensure aggregate rates are not above the *pro forma* increases. Aspire also has an income sharing agreement with the University for occupancy over 95%, so it benefits the university and Aspire to maintain a high occupancy. The agreement between the University and Aspire allows 5 priority levels for housing tenants. Kirkwood students are the lowest priority for possible tenancy in Aspire, along with other undergraduate students. Concern was expressed by the committee about advertisement of the property to Kirkwood students. Statistically Kirkwood students are younger than graduate and professional students. Also, when adding Kirkwood students as a potential lease population, Aspire increases unit demand therefore justifying rate increases over the *pro forma* rate.*

Dining options are available to graduate students. Graduate Student Employees do not receive a discount at University Housing & Dining. There is no long term plan by the University of Iowa to build its own graduate student housing structure.

Grant Jerkovich offered to distribute the Path Forward SIT6 report regarding Off-Campus Graduate Student Housing and Renter Protections.

3. GSEC Bylaws – During the meeting KaLeigh White edited the bylaws as discussed by the committee. By majority vote the changes were approved. The bylaws will be distributed to the committee after the meeting.
4. Survey report – The survey report team (Mobley, DuBose, Kelly, and White) will meet over summer to better codify and analyze collected data. The plan is to distribute a full report to the committee by the first fall 2018 meeting (August/September).
5. New agenda item – summer pay – In the past three equal lump-sum, payments were made whereas last year the payments were prorated. Concern was expressed that unequal paychecks are financially challenging for graduate students. The concern will be advanced to Human Resources. The committee favors Human Resources contacting GSEC prior to implementing graduate student employee benefit changes, including pay.

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM.

*post meeting information from Stange: “In a follow-up conversation with Aspire management, responses by Aspire applicants to an optional question do not show that any tenants are or will be Kirkwood students.”