



GSG Assembly Meeting  
Jadwin 102  
**February 8, 2017 5:45pm**

The meeting is called to order at 5:59pm.

#### Approval of January Minutes

Will Smith (Politics Rep) motions to approve the minutes. Noah Apthorpe (Computer Science Rep) seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

#### Annual Giving Presentation

Laurence Latimer (Volunteer Chair for Graduate Alumni Annual Giving) presenting.

- Was at the Woodrow Wilson School, and currently work in corporate venture capital.
- Annual giving is primarily driven by volunteers (a feature unique to Princeton). Last year, Princeton raised just under \$60,000,000. This year numbers are roughly the same.
- Princeton's annual operating budget is just over \$1B. They invest over \$100,000 per student per year. Endowment is about \$22B. More than half of the operating budget is earmarked for specific purposes (e.g. named fellowships and professorships, the flowers outside prospect garden, etc.). These are called restricted funds.
- The remainder is unrestricted. About 10% of the University's educational budget comes from annual giving.
- Ways in which annual giving impacts students here include:
  - Fellowships driven by annual giving funds (e.g. travel grants, the new initiative for 6th-year funding in the humanities);
  - Some of the new family-friendly initiatives;
  - Retention and recruitment of excellent faculty (e.g. Prof. Haldane's package was increased with annual giving funds after he won the Nobel prize, in order to remain competitive with competing offers).
- As the chair of annual giving alumni, the job is to raise money. Annual giving is one of the key ways in which graduate alumni give back to the university.
- The university has historically been very centered on the department (at the grad level). Since I left, they've done a lot more to create an environment that is graduate student-wide - it may not seem like that to you, but relative to folks from other times there has been a positive change.
- It's hard for me to reach out to alumni from other departments. I'd love to get your help

in reaching out to alumni from your departments. The idea being that a message from someone in their department will have much more of an impact.

- Mircea and the Executive Committee sent out a survey where people could provide messages. We've received almost 30 responses which are very moving. My ask today is that you recruit someone from your department that would agree to a number of things:
  - To have their name shared as part of annual giving;
  - To share two or three sentences about your Princeton experience (even better if related to annual giving - e.g. if they benefitted from one of the travel grants funded by annual giving)
- Questions:
  - Joshua Wallace (Astrophysics Rep): I know annual giving is focused on unrestricted funds. Has anyone talked about requesting donations for specific purposes for graduate students that could improve responses?
    - Laurence: Yes. There are several groups that raise money for the University. Several of these raise money for specific purposes (like buildings, named fellowships, etc.). They've had relatively more success amongst graduate alumni. Their hypothesis is that naming a professorship or a building has a bit of ego associated with it. Annual giving is anonymous.
  - You're asking for our name to be on the email. What would it look like?
    - Laurence: The email would be from you, and the note would be from you. It would be sent on your behalf, so the responses won't come back to you (unless you choose to). If you so chose, we could filter specific responses back to you. We'd be doing all the administration. The only lift is name, department and graduation year, and the two or three sentences that you provide.
    - Mircea Davidescu (GSG President): It sounds like this letter is a boilerplate. I'm curious whether people would like to see the template, if that's possible.
    - Laurence: Absolutely. We can send that out to you guys next week. The goal is to get something out in April. So we'd like to have responses this month if possible.
  - Michelle Frazer (AOS Rep): Some of us have already filled this survey out. After we see the template, could we edit our responses now that we know what it will be used for?
    - Laurence: Yes, absolutely. We can take the latest submission.
- Feel free to reach out directly. Mircea will send out the email contact to Assembly.

Election ballot review and approval

- Mircea Davidescu (GSG President): We wanted to get approval for the list of candidates.
- Daniel Vitek (GSG Academic Affairs): Did we ever send out a copy of the actual ballot? I have some paper copies that I can pass around.
- Mircea: We have some vacancies for Communications Director, Treasurer, and Social Officer. Also, none of the positions are contested. That being said, we work with what we've got.
- Daniel: The only detail that's important is that turnout in GSG elections has been steadily dropping. That heavily influenced our decision to put the referendum as the first item.
- Questions:
  - Is anyone actually working on the referendum that could push for it?
    - Akshay Mehra (GSG Vice-President): I guess that's up to the people who want the referendum. We will publicize as we always do.
  - Akshay: What happens if someone does not complete the candidates' ballot?
    - We will count it as a partial ballot and it will count towards turnout.
  - Michelle: Could we make sure we emphasize that we need 10% voter turnout?
  - Merle Eisenberg (Lakeside Delegate): Maybe this is a result of the call for nominees:
    - Mircea: We tried to include the chairs in the election under the assumption that that would help increase people's engagement.
    - Akshay: I agree with you. This is a recruiting issue. But we had enough candidates for the positions, but several people didn't accept.
    - Mircea: Also, because the list of who has accepted isn't known until Assembly approves the full list of candidates, it's not possible to play the game of running for uncontested positions.

Julia Wittes (MoBio Rep) motions to approve. Michelle Frazer (AOS Rep) seconds. The motion passes with one abstention (Joshua Wallace, Astrophysics Rep).

#### Handing the current political climate

- Mircea Davidescu (GSG President): Several students have written to us showing concern about the current political climate in the US. It's not clear what the Executive Committee should do that's not just hot air.
- Akshay Mehra (GSG Vice-President): The question is if Assembly views us as an apolitical body (which seems to be the case), in which case we just stay out of it. Otherwise, would Assembly give us operational freedom to, for example, send a letter to the editor, or to provide organizational support to some group organizing an event.
- Akshay: We have sent letters to the editor in the past, stating that we don't approve statements issued by the University, for example.
- Mircea: Article 9.8 of the constitution states that the GSG will not provide material or

organizational support to any political cause.

- Julia Wittes (MoBio Rep): I'm confused by this. I feel like you can politicize anything. I don't see the current issues as political until the last election, so I don't see a problem.
- Merle Eisenberg (Lakeside Delegate): It also seems that this would mirror the University's own language.
- Akshay: Does Assembly think that this is a waste of time?
  - Gabe: I guess that's my problem. If the GSG sends out an op-ed in response to something Eisgruber said, it might not be very impactful. Maybe sending something to the gsg listserv would be more useful.
- Daniel Vitek (GSG Academic Affairs): In regards to the recent immigration executive order. There are a number of graduate students from the countries impacted. Collecting stories of how that executive order affected (or could affect) students on campus is something that we've discussed and my personal view is that it's the minimum level of political statement that could be made.
- Lily Secora (Graduate School): If a group were to only present one side of a political issue, that would be a problem. Mircea provides a concrete example: could the GSG provide funding to the students attending the March for Science? Since it's not for a particular party, it should be fine.
- Merle: You should just ask legal counsel.
- Hendia Edmund (GSG Health and Life): You can just discuss both sides of the issue.
- The dean's statement mentioned spaces to have discussions, so it seems that the GSG can provide such spaces.

#### Call for volunteers

- Masquerade Party:
  - Brad O'Brien (GSG Special Events Officer): we still need some paid volunteers
  - Mircea Davidescu (GSG President): How much per hour?
  - Brad: \$15 per hour (increased for this party)
- Wellness Week:
  - Hendia Edmund (GSG Health and Life): We need unpaid volunteers to set up at noon every day (you don't need to volunteer for every day)
  - If interested, email [gsg@princeton.edu](mailto:gsg@princeton.edu)

#### Executive Summary

- Michelle Frazer (AOS Rep): Could we talk more about this Timeline?
  - Jose Ferreira (GSG Secretary): everyone should have access to it ([timeline.princeton.edu](http://timeline.princeton.edu)) and it should pull information from your CAS-linked applications.

- There are some bugs in terms of actual implementation, and it's not yet working completely well. For example, some of the widgets aren't updating the way they should be.
  - We've added a one-page calendar to our website which we will update with GSG-related events.
- Merle Eisenberg (Lakeside Delegate): Is this something that's being rolled out by the University?
  - Jose: Yes.
  - Merle: That's the first I'm hearing about it.
  - Jose: I'm not sure they did a good job of advertising it yet.

### Open Forum

- Mircea Davidescu (GSG President): The GHP housing report will be sent out for electronic vote soon, so be on the lookout. It's important to continue to look deeply and quantitatively at how graduate housing can be improved.
- Amitesh Datta (Mathematics Rep): Was a description of the positions sent out in the call for candidates?
  - Daniel Vitek (GSG Academic Affairs): No, but we should have.
  - Amitesh: It should have been done earlier.
  - Jose Ferreira (GSG Secretary): We need to update the descriptions to reflect the actual roles.
- Victoria Luu (Geosciences): If any students are concerned about changes to health care, there is a student committee on Health (you can ask Hendia Edmund for more information). One of the main messages they wanted to get across is that the SHP is a self-insured plan, so Princeton ultimately decides what gets covered and what doesn't (aetna intermediates). At this meeting we were assured that there would be no changes for the next academic year.

William Smith (Politics Rep) motions to adjourn. Bernat Guillen Pegueroles (PACM Rep) seconds. The meeting adjourns at 6:49pm.

**Next meeting:** March 8, 2017 5:45pm