



GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

13 November, 2013
September Assembly Meeting
Jadwin Hall 102
5:55-7:10 pm

President Funk calls the meeting to order at 5:55 pm.

Cynthia Cherrey (VP of Campus Life) addresses the assembly

- The Vice President for Campus Life is a new position at the University and VP Cherrey is only the second to hold the position. She has been at Princeton since 2010.
- Her role is to find ways to make life on campus better. Some priorities include finding ways to bring faculty and students together. One way they have tried to do this is by sponsoring faculty/student dinners at VP Cherrey's house.
- VP Cherrey's office was involved in the integration of grad students into the University Student Life Committee (USLC), which previously only included representatives from the faculty and undergraduate student body.
- VP Cherrey is interested in investigating where the University needs to have consistent policies for undergraduates and graduate students and where different policies are needed.
- Her office is also involved in oversight of the Center for Religious Life, the PACE Center, McCosh and Career Services.
- The VP of Campus Life's office was involved in polling graduate students two years ago about housing.

Questions for VP Cherrey from Assembly:

- **What is the administration thinking moving forward about housing? 70% of graduate students housed does not apply to all graduate students but excludes students with DCE status. We are concerned that vulnerable populations will be hit the hardest by limited housing, especially students without fellowships, with pets, or with families. We are also concerned that we cannot effectively recruit new graduate students given the limited housing availability in Princeton. In Mercer County there are only 26 rental units at a Butler price point.**
 - VP Cherrey wants to establish a partnership with graduate students. She says that graduate students have been involved in the housing plan since its inception. However, the University is only now beginning to think about its long-range plans. We have to look at which groups are the most impacted by housing limitations. The University needs to be clearer about what's going on with housing – we should more thoroughly write up and put on our websites what has happened with respect to the housing plan and where things are going.
- **There needs to be a long-term assessment of housing needs. How can we work with you to get numbers?**
 - We need to find out how many students have a special need.
- **More pressingly, how can we address short-term issues?**

- We need to get the right people to the table
- Kyle Keller (Vice President): The Graduate Housing Advisory Board exists for this purpose – to bring students and administrators together.
 - **Are these open meetings that we can attend?**
 - No. To bring issues to the board, please contact either the GSG or the representative from your housing development.
- **Is low-income housing available for graduate students?**
 - Assembly members: Yes, but many students don't qualify for low-income housing and it takes a long time to get placed. A certain number of units are reserved for graduate students.
- **Can we expect some kind of response to our housing advocacy? And if so, what kind of time-frame can we expect this response on?**
 - VP Cherrey cannot answer these questions at this time.
- **How can I contact someone who will listen to the information I have.**
 - James Poole is a good contact person and the GSG is a good contact.
- **Jim Poole is not in a position to make decisions. How can we find someone who can make decisions? Less than optimal housing is going to affect our ability to compete with other Universities for recruits. Our peer institutions may have less graduate housing, but they are largely in big cities with access to better public transit.**
 - Secretary's note: These are all questions that were raised but not fully answered during the current meeting. The President of the University, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Board of Trustees make these types of high-level decisions.
- **Carolann Buff (MUS rep, Pricom) comments that Pricom is talking about future budgets right now. There may be housing solutions other than keeping Butler open.**
- VP Cherrey leaves for a later meeting.

A follow-up to the discussion with VP Cherrey:

- Friederike Funk (President): The GSG is currently advocating for improved housing in three ways: Concerning the past, we advocate for better communication as to why and when certain decisions were made. Concerning the present, we work with Housing Services and the Graduate School to make the sure the transition to Lakeside is successful, and to make sure that families, people with pets, and other graduate students with special needs, are taken care of. Third, concerning the future, we have always been advocating and are still advocating for an improved housing situation. Please contact GSG if your family has a financial problem or if you have statistics about housing that you can provide to us. (Secretary's note: a housing letter from 2012 can be found on the GSG website.)
- Kyle Keller (Vice President): We're working with James Poole currently to try to find out what are the financial and safety concerns about Butler that motivate its closure.
- A student stresses that it is important to have better communication with administrators and also between graduate students. Could the GSG send a weekly/bi-weekly newsletter, put information on a webpage, or send emails? Students want to hear more about the results of meetings such as the USLC meeting held yesterday.

- Friederike: If people are interested, we can make the information available on our website or send emails in between assembly meetings. We already report on the outcomes of these meetings to the GSG assembly.
- Carolann Buff (MUS rep, Pricom): Progress in housing for grad students moves slowly because changes must go through Pricom, and Pricom moves slowly. Carolann would like to see some data on how the increase in stipends over time corresponds to the increase in the cost of living and the cost of housing.
 - What happens to students once they stop receiving a stipend?
 - Carolann: This is still an issue – however, increasing stipends can still help in certain ways.
- A student asks whether the GSG can adopt a specific position that graduate housing needs to be improved. They suggest that what we write should include a specific proposal of ways to improve housing.
 - Friederike: this sounds like a good idea.
- Another student asks: Is James Poole the best person to have for the Housing-focused GSG Assembly meeting next month?
 - He can give out information about the past and future of the Housing Plan.
 - The Exec Board will see whether Andrew Kane and/or Chad Klaus would be willing to attend.
- Andrew Edwards (HIS rep): President Eisgruber has [office hours](#). Andrew talked to him for 45 minutes about housing and encourages other students to speak with him as well.
- The Exec Board will try to communicate more regularly with graduate students about housing because we realize the issue is time-sensitive.

Mircea Davidescu (EEB rep) motions to approve the minutes for September and October. Andrew Edwards (HIS rep) seconds the motion. The minutes pass by unanimous voice vote.

A volunteer is needed for the Princeton Garden Theatre subcommittee:

- The commitment requires the student to attend two meetings as the voice of the graduate students.
- Hannes Mandel volunteers.

Executive Committee Report:

- We meet every other month with University Services – please let us know if there’s anything you need us to bring up by emailing us at gsg@princeton.edu.
 - Public Safety reports that a new evacuation plan has been developed in response to the bomb threat last summer. They ask that students sign up their spouses on PTENS via SCORE to receive emergency notifications. Also, there are new blue-lights in place on campus.
 - Dining services has redesigned their website to make information on dining plans more easily accessible.
 - The parking renewal system didn’t work this year for some people – we notified Transportation and Parking Services about the problem and it is being fixed.
 - The move into Lakeside will be staggered. Students moving from Butler to Lakeside should make sure they know ahead of time when they’re supposed to move if they’re planning to be away for the

summer. Lakeside floor plans are currently online. About 25% of units will be furnished; in the long-term, the number of furnished units can be increased if there is more demand. Furnished units will cost \$15 more in rent per month than unfurnished units. This cost was decided on based on the approximately 10-year longevity of the furniture (in other words, $\$15 \times 120 \text{ months} = \1800 ; approximately the cost to furnish each unit).

- Ivy Summit Plus Conference at Columbia: Lizette Taguchi (WWS, GCHC), Rachael Barry (Communications Director), Minjin Lee (CEE) and Friederike attended. The group attended workshops and learned how the GSGs at other schools work. This generated several ideas we may try to implement at Princeton. These include:
 - Orientation website (this is already in progress – the new PU Grad School website coming online this Spring will have an orientation Website.)
 - “Nerd nights” to bring students from different disciplines together to talk about research.
 - Some GSGs meet every other week with the Dean of the Graduate School or have an appointed liaison with the Board of Trustees.
 - Project Management Software may be useful for the transfer to the new GSG Executive Board in the spring. This would help current new exec board members become familiar with exactly what has been done or tried by previous Executive Boards.
 - Other Universities have more project-based committees and fewer standing committees. This may be helpful – our GSG has trouble getting volunteers for our standing committees.
 - Next year, the Ivy Summit will be at Yale. Princeton will host the event in 2019. This will involve hosting 60 people. The Graduate School has already promised \$5000 to help pay for the Summit in 2019. We also set aside money in the GSG budget each year to help pay for hosting the Summit.
- Upcoming:
 - We are working to advocate for students with DCE status and to get department-specific information including their financial support for and teaching requirements of DCE students. To gather some of this information, we are thinking of surveying our GSG assembly members about DCE policies in each department.
 - The Graduate School has submitted a Pricom request that would allow Grad Students to get 6 free meals at the GC per semester. The idea is to encourage students to have dinner at the GC and then go to events hosted at the GC. The GSG is supporting this request, although this is not our greatest priority at the moment.
 - The GSG would like to make a Pricom request for increased transit subsidies for students who ride the NJ Transit buses to campus. However, we weren't able to submit this fall because **Pricom requests must be prepared in late spring/early summer. Future Exec Boards should be aware of this when they plan to make Pricom requests.**
 - Interested students should consider running for a position on the GSG Executive Board in February.
 - Graduate students who would like to have their research highlighted on the Princeton website or on the Research at Princeton website can

contact Office of the Dean for Research communications manager
Catherine Zandonella (czandone@princeton.edu).

Carolann Buff (MUS rep, Pricom) motions to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 pm. The meeting is adjourned.

