Outline and Summary

1. Call to Order, Introductions, and Approval of Minutes: Six new members were introduced to Assembly.

2. Special Guest: Dean of the Graduate School William B. Russel: The dean reported on the Graduate School self-assessment. After that, several topics were discussed, including: the self-assessment (move to Clio Hall, administrative details, student groups), graduate housing (future plans for renovation and construction, Butler apartments, the rents at new Lawrence, planning), funding and stipends, progress on post-enrollment, and best practices (graduate student departmental committees, advising, thesis committees).

3. Funding Requests: The “Butler Chinese New Year” was funded at $300.

4. Reports
   1. CPUC (PriComm requests)
   2. Children and Dependents Committee (preliminary report; healthcare for dependents)
   3. International Students’ Concerns Committee (new security policies)
   4. Campus Relations Committee (post-doc relations, graduate research symposium, student organizations)
   5. Housing Committee (room draw)
   6. Report on Public Safety/SHARE Meeting

5. New Business

6. Adjournment

Attendance

- **Representatives present** • Aleksandar Donev, ACM • Peter Locke, ANT • Irina Marinov, AOS • Sinéad Mac Namara, CEE • Jack Tinsley, CHE • Jia Su, CHM • Jessica H. Clark, CLA • Brigitta A. Lee, EAS • Jonathan Vogel, ECO • Fei Sun, ELE • James Bickford, ENG • Karin Sigloch, GEO • Donna A. C. Sy, HOS • Chris Wyckham, MAE • Lior Silberman, MAT • Shin-Yi Lin, MOL • Annika Peter, PHY • Jonathan Eastvold, POL • David R. Smith, PPL • Kim Montgomery, PSY • Susan Gunasti, REL • Debbie Becher, SOC • Newsha M. Dau, WWS •
• Delegates present • Yuan Liu, Association of Chinese Students and Scholars (ACSS) • Huiyan Yang, Butler Apartments • Weining Man, Council of International Graduate Students (CIGS) • Lior Silberman, Graduate College (GC) • Radhika Wijetunge, Lawrence Apartments • Leonard F. Pease III, Off-Campus

• Councilors present • Chair Leslie Medema, title="Council of the Princeton University Community">CPUC, CPUC Priorities Committee • Parliamentary Secretary Leonard F. Pease III, CPUC, CPUC Priorities Committee • Corresponding Secretary Nicole Esparza • Press Secretary Meredith Safran • Recording Secretary João Pedro Boavida • Social Chair Sinéad Mac Namara • Brigitta Lee, CPUC, CPUC Executive Committee • Lior Silberman, CPUC, CPUC Rights and Rules Committee • David R. Smith, CPUC Rights and Rules Committee • Fei Sun, CPUC Governance Committee

• Others present • Tom Jenkins, vice-chairman of the Children and Dependents Committee • William B. Russel, dean of the Graduate School • Lisa M. Sherov, GC residence life coordinator • Beth McKeown, community programs coordinator • Jeff Dwoskin (ELE) • Anita Adhitya (GEO) • Manish Vachharajani (ELE), chair of the GC House Committee

• Representatives absent • Christiane I. Meyer, EEB • Valerie Dionne, FIT • Michael K. House, GER • Jane Murphy, HIS • Andrew Moroz, ORF • Cole M. Crittenden, SLA

• Delegates absent • Aderemi Artis, Black Graduate Caucus (BGC) • Heather White, Women’s Center

• Councilors absent • Assistant Chair Eric Adelizzi • Aderemi Artis, CPUC Resources Committee • Meredith Galanter Hastings, CPUC Judicial Committee • Ian Parrish, CPUC, CPUC Executive Committee • Rob Sobak, CPUC • Joseph P. Valentino, CPUC

• Representative seats vacant • ARC • ART • AST • COM • COS • MUS • NES • POS • PHI • SPO

• Delegate seats vacant • Hibben/Magie Apartments • Millstone Apartments
Minutes

I. Call to Order, Introductions, and Approval of Minutes

The Graduate Student Government held its regular monthly Assembly meeting on December 10, 2003, at Frist 309. Chair Leslie Medema called the meeting to order at about 6:02pm, and welcome Dean Russel.

Parliamentary Secretary Leonard Pease introduced the new Representatives and Delegates: Newsha M. Dau (WWS), Donna Sy (HOS), James Bickford (ENG), Peter Locke (ANT), Yuan Liu (ACSS), and Shin-Yi Lin (MOL).

Recording Secretary João Pedro Boavida proceeded to the minutes. He stated that except for minor typos, there were no corrections to be done. Sinéad Mac Namara and Nicole Esparza moved the approval of the minutes, and the motion carried unanimously.

II. Special Guest: Dean of the Graduate School William B. Russel

Ms. Medema introduced the Dean of the Graduate School, William B. Russel.

Dean Russel circulated an handout, with the documents he was about to present (a copy of the handout will be deposited in the archives, together with these minutes). The first page listed the topics for discussion proposed by the GSG Executive Committee.

The dean discussed first the Graduate School self-assessment, started in November 2002 (shortly after his taking office) and concluded by the end of the Summer 2003. The self-assessment was an effort to review the Graduate School administration. It helped Dean Russel learn about the Graduate School, and identify steps to improve staffing, rationalize the budget, and improve communication.

The previous assessment had been conducted in 1990, when an external advisory committee identified five areas on which they reported. The Graduate School responded constructively
As to the current assessment, last September the dean provided a progress report to the president and the provost, who endorsed enthusiastically the goals proposed.

The dean discussed the different points of his report. He added some details on two specific action items on communication (page 5): the Communications Office is working with the Graduate School on a new website, and he would like to have feedback and suggestions; and for the first time this last Spring there had been a report to faculty on graduate admissions (while there’s been an annual report on undergraduate admission for long).

Having presented on the self-assessment, Dean Russel invited questions on that topic.

Lior Silberman asked about the move to Clio Hall (mentioned in page 5). Dean Russel stated that the move in was planned for August 2005. The development office is in Clio Hall temporarily, and renovations will start only next June. Although there will be less space, it will be better organized, and there will be space for the extra staff whose need had been identified in the self-assessment. The move is necessary because Nassau Hall (current site of the Graduate School) is overcrowded.

(Later on in the meeting, there were a few more questions about the self-assessment. For the reader’s benefit, they are discussed in the next two paragraphs.)

About the SWOT (page 4), Ms. Dau asked whether there had been any discussion on administration of partners. The dean stated it had not been discussed during this process, and asked more details. Ms. Dau stated that there were some difficulties in getting some things (such as getting IDs for partners, or having marriages and name changes processed in the University records) done in a timely manner, and that there should be better information.

Irina Marinov observed that the report stated there had been substantial progress on the marginal status of graduate students as compared to undergraduate students. She expressed surprise, and stated that there is a separation between graduate and undergraduate student
groups. Dean Russel stated that the marginal status is not as strong as before, but it’s more so than it should be. As to the groups, he stated he didn’t know how to address that, and observed that the GSG had been constructively helpful in the past. Meredith Safran stated that the Campus Relations Committee is working on that front, and that Brigitta Lee was doing a good job chairing the committee. Ms. Safran expressed her understanding that the separation had to do with how funding is transferred to groups: while undergraduate students pay an activities fee, graduate students pay only $5 for the GSG (that funds many groups), and Dean Montero helps as possible. Dean Russel agreed with the identification of the problem, and asked suggestions of what to change. Ms. Sy stated she was the treasurer of the newly created Princeton Swing Club. The group had been chartered as a graduate group. In one of its recent events (the Swing Dance in the GC), there had been 25% undergraduate attendance. This meant graduate student money was supporting activities for undergraduate students. Dean Russel suggested Janet Dickerson (vice-president for campus life) was the right person to talk to. Mr. Silberman stated that, except for officers, there were no restrictions in group membership [Minutes 9.10.2003, V.A].

The next topic that Dean Russel discussed was housing. He observed that the University was building a new undergraduate dorm, and construction of the sixth college was about to start. In the longer term, he stated the University was looking into housing more faculty and staff, as well as graduate students.

Dean Russel then moved into future graduate housing. There had been some talk of construction in the Princeton Medical Center (the hospital) and Merwick House. The president had asked an architectural advisory committee for advice on where the campus should expand, and what should be built across the lake. The consensus seemed to be that there should be no academic buildings across the lake. As the University owns the land from Nassau Street to Route One, and from Butler to the GC, the long-term implication is expansion toward the GC. As to building across the lake, the consensus seems to be for building only along roads. A location that looks appealing for graduate housing is between the Dinky Line and Alexander Street. The dean added that although the hospital negotiations continue, he doesn’t think it would allow good graduate housing. As to Merwick, there’s not enough development density for the housing we need.

Sinéad Mac Namara stated that new housing must not be decided on a stopgap basis. She
also expressed concern about the high quality construction that had been used in new Lawrence, and had given rise to the high rents. She stated that graduate students want to be involved from the beginning. Dean Russel stated that that message had been heard very clearly. As to the cost factor, he stated that the University would continue to build to very high quality on the main campus, but in the periphery affordability will be important. Ms. Safran asked how new Lawrence could be explained in that context; the dean explained that this was a new policy, not in effect when the new Lawrence construction was decided.

Ms. Safran asked about the future of Butler Apartments, and whether that kind of units would be built. Dean Russel stated that the University won’t build substandard housing in the future. Ms. Safran asked why the hospital is not a good site. Dean Russel reiterated that he didn’t think the conditions would be appropriate, and that he want housing to be a plus for prospective students. At this point, Ms. Mac Namara observed that some students do take prospective students to visit Butler (if only, because their hosts live at Butler).

Ms. Marinov asked how the University compares with other universities when it comes to housing. Dean Russel stated Princeton houses 76% to 78% of enrolled graduate students, while no other university houses more than 50%. He stated that schools like Stanford or Harvard have prices similar to new Lawrence, although (he added) no one else has something like Butler.

Jonathan Vogel mentioned the high rents of new Lawrence as compared to old Lawrence, and asked whether there were plans to change it. Dean Russel stated that it had been discussed. However, it ultimately costs money, and would mean a trade-off with stipends. The dean thinks it’s better to raise the stipends, and it will be easier to keep it in the long term. As to the rents, he thinks the right strategy is to offer a range of options, make sure more of Hibben-Magie is available, and have more bed space offered (for choice) than actually given. That way, supply can be influenced by demand.

Mr. Silberman pointed out that, during the design of new Lawrence, there had been a meeting during which student input had been ignored. Dean Russel thought that the right model is the one used for Whitman College. The Facilities Planning Group starts planning, and several groups are involved in programming and deciding the facilities. There’s also a screening committee, with students, college masters, and faculty. In the dean’s opinion, it’s
in these committees that graduate students should be. He also observed that there were graduate students in the programming committee for Whitman College. Mr. Pease stated that such a system would not have avoided new Lawrence, for students would be involved only too late. Dean Russel thought it was not clear whether it would be so: the design is done in parallel with the committees’ work, and in fact there had been three massive changes in the design due to cost issues. Students have been involved in programming and determining needs (which includes affordability of the rents), but not in deciding the cost of the construction itself.

Coming back to the comparison with other universities, Mr. Pease stated that other universities didn’t have post-enrolled students (which are excluded of the 78% mentioned before), and asked whether DCC students would be allowed in the draw, if only to assess demand. Dean Russel stated that the policy on housing for post-enrolled students remained. He added that he fully recognized that DCC students need housing too, but the fact is that there’s not enough housing even for enrolled students. However, the Graduate School is keeping statistics on DCC students; last year there had been 187. As to the percentage of students housed, he stated that the provost would never say the University would try to house 78% of all enrolled and DCC students.

Ms. Sy stated that at the recent PriComm open meeting [Minutes 11.12.2003, V.F], it had been stated that the rents were high to keep them close to market values. She asked how it was decided that the new housing would be apartments. Dean Russel stated that he had never been told of market value being a reason for establishing high rents. As to the need for apartments, a study conducted by Brailsford & Dunlavey [Minutes 4.18.2001, III] had pinpointed the need for more apartments. Ms. Sy asked whether cost had been factored in. The dean stated that an apartment cost is always higher than a dorm room, because an apartment must have a kitchen. Mr. Silberman commented on the unpopularity of the GC: although it is commonly said that the GC has empty spaces, that is no longer true. It happened only at a time when housing only charged a fee for contract cancellations after the end of August, when many people had already procured other accommodations. Since the deadline was moved to June, the GC has been always full. Mr. Boavida stated that there are only two costs for undergraduate housing; the difference is only $60 in apartments with kitchen (Spellman Hall).
Jack Tinsley stated that people living in the new apartments would have to pay a deposit of $1000, and asked whether it could be reduced to $500. It was ascertained that the usual policy was one month rent, which is a very large amount for a graduate student; the dean stated he would see what can be done. Mr. Tinsley also asked what were the long term plans for Butler. Dean Russel stated it was not clear. However, it can not be replaced until some new housing is built. There would only be modest upgrades in the insulation. Huiyan Yang stated that she knew a student living in Butler who had made photos of the insulation under the floor, and took them to housing. Although they will repair that apartment, they stated that it would take one year to repair all apartments. She observed that the University requires the temperature in the units to be kept at 65° Fahrenheit, which (because of the poor insulation) means a high energy bill. Dean Russel stated that 40 units would be insulated shortly.

(Again some comments on housing that happened later on in the meeting are moved here for the reader’s benefit. Normal narrative order is restored after the next two paragraphs.)

Chris Wyckham wished to express that in his opinion Butler is a great place. He thought it’s important to preserve the community, and expressed hopes that no apartment tower would be built there. Dean Russel stated that the University knows that students like Butler (the recent units are very popular). He didn’t think there should be any concern about building an apartment tower, for neighbors would never approve of such a project.

Mr. Silberman observed the report mentioned maintenance needs in the GC. As GC Delegate, he wished to express the fact that other housing units need maintenance more seriously. Dean Russel stated that the Lawrence high-rise would be off-line next year, and the residents would be moved to new Lawrence at old Lawrence rates. Radhika Wijetunge stated 96 beds would be off-line. There was widespread surprise at this news. Mr. Silberman expressed concerns about an increase in the rent after the renovation.

Debbie Becher asked more details about financial support (page 6). Dean Russel explained that the funding structure currently assumes that a small fraction of graduate students will gain external fellowships. The Graduate School is trying to encourage departments to provide financial incentives for students who get external fellowships. He is also trying to work with departments to have students serve as AIs a pedagogically sound amount, not
less and not too much more.

Ms. Becher asked how funding is distributed among departments, and how the decisions on the length of funding are reached. The dean explained that departments never lose funding. Every year, based on discussions with each department, the Graduate School sets enrollment targets per program. The fellowship amounts are set during admissions meetings with DGSs, using funds from the Graduate School, the programs, and the departments. The amounts are incremented marginally every year.

Ms. Becher asked what a department that wants more students, or to provide funding for more years, should do. Dean Russel stated that a formal proposal must be made, but it doesn’t happen very often. In such a case, the Graduate School will work with the department to determine whether an increase is possible. Nicole Esparza asked if any of those decisions is tied with undergraduate majors in the department, or rather it is completely divorced. Dean Russel stated there was no tie. The only possible relation was with AI service, but if there was to be any tie it should be to faculty.

David Smith asked whether there was any similar tie between graduate students and tenured faculty. He stated that in his program (PPL) there were 30 graduate students for 3 tenured faculty. The dean stated that in the Plasma Physics Laboratory the research staff appointed as lecturers are considered to be part of the faculty for the purposes of the graduate program.

James Bickford asked whether the stipends were constant during time. Dean Russel stated they were increased at 3%/year. Mr. Bickford stated that in his program there were fourth years receiving less than incoming students. The dean stated that it has been the case. However, the annual increase in all stipends should solve that in the near future. He suggested that one possible solution was to have pre-generals and post-generals stipends as in the Natural Sciences and Engineering.

Dean Russel continued to the final topics in his presentation: post-enrollment and best practices (pages 9 and 8).
In the last page he had a table with DCC numbers last year and this year, as well as how many of those students had already defended. He stated that the number of current DCC students was about half or more of an incoming cohort. He added that there were an extra 10 to 20 students who hadn’t taken DCC. However, there’s no way to know yet whether DCC made a difference, because there is no previous data.

As to the graduate student departmental committees, the Graduate School had recently asked the departments whether they had one, and asked them to set up one if they hadn’t. There were committees in all programs (two programs hadn’t replied to his request yet).

As to advising in the beginning of the program, it is typically done by individual faculty, or the DGSs. In some cases, there’s a group of faculty who advise several students. As to the importance of advising in keeping low time to degree, Dean Russel deemed it very important.

Another question was about the time from submitting the dissertation to defending it and graduating. Dean Russel stated the Graduate School had no control over it. The graduate student departmental committees could look into it, and if they could report with reliable data, that information would be useful. Ms. Mac Namara asked whether 6 to 9 months was excessive. Dean Russel thought it was excessive, and that when that happens the department should do something.

Ms. Becher asked how should students go about getting thesis committees (if currently there’s only one advisor). Dean Russel stated that that would be discussed in the monthly meetings with the DGSs. DGSs of programs who have thesis committees will be asked to talk about that. That’s also something on which the graduate student departmental committees could be helpful.

Ms. Safran stated that the GSG had conducted its own investigation on departmental committees [Minutes 10.8.2003, VII.B]: all representatives had been asked to ascertain whether there was a committee in their department; if not, whether the DGS had asked one to be formed; if yes, how it works. The representatives from 26 departments answered. In 5 departments there was no committee and students hadn’t been told about the Graduate School’s request. Ms. Safran thanked Dean Russel for pushing the issue, so that
many new committees had been created. She expressed one difficulty: it’s not clear how to start a new committee, and what a committee can do. She suggested that the GSG could find information on what successful committees are doing, and compile an handbook. Dean Russel thought that would be a good idea, and Ms. Safran offered to circulate it with the Graduate School or Dean Redman. Dean Russel asked Ms. Safran to send her list of answers (about which departments have committees) to Sandy Sussman (assistant to the dean).

There being no more questions, Ms. Medema thanked Dean Russel for coming to the meeting and for the productive discussion. She stated that his previous visit had been in her first meeting in the GSG, and that it was very interesting. She thanked the dean for telling us about the challenges for the future, and about important ideas. She asked all present to introduce themselves. After the introductions, there was a round of applause, and the dean left the meeting at 7:15pm.

### III. Funding Requests

As Eitan Bonderover had resigned as treasurer [Minutes 11.12.2003, IV.A] and could not be present, Ms. Medema consulted with him in advance of the meeting and presented the funding requests. She observed that we need a treasurer to complete the current term, and that only a couple of months was left.

As to the funding requests, they had been sent in advance of the meeting.

Ms. Yang presented the request for the “Butler Chinese New Year Party”. She stated that the recently held “Butler Cheese and Wine” [Minutes 10.8.2003, VIII.B] had been very well attended, and the new event would be just as good. This year the committee is asking $300, for they estimate the graduate attendance at 200. Ms. Yang further observed that there are many Chinese students at Butler, and they would likely attend the event. Traditional Chinese food would be served.

Ms. Medema stated that Mr. Bonderover recommended funding by $200. However, she emphasized that was no more than a recommendation. Although the original plans were to spend $660 per budget quarter [href="../10/#VIIIb">Minutes 10.8.2003, VIII.B] and we had
already spent about $500 this quarter, it’s not common to have requests in January [see report in Minutes 11.12.2003, IV.A].

Ms. Mac Namara moved (and was seconded by Mr. Silberman) to fund at $200. Jonathan Eastvold asked how this funding compared with previous decisions (this budget year) on funding, and asked whether we need to revise our funding practices or pay from next quarter’s budget. Ms. Medema stated that in previous requests we had given $1.5 per graduate student in attendance, but Mr. Bonderover had suggested that for large requests we might consider smaller amounts. As to the funding practices, Ms. Medema stated the Executive Committee was working on that. As to taking money from the next quarter, Ms. Medema stated it was an option.

Mr. Pease moved (and was seconded) to amend the pending motion (Ms. Mac Namara’s motion to fund by $200) so that the funding is at $300. Jack Tinsley spoke in favor of the new value: based on Mr. Bonderover’s already alluded to report, he stated that the third quarter would likely be lean and so we can spend more in the first quarter. He also observed that we would be spending $900 for food in the meetings throughout the year, only for the benefit of Assembly members; maybe Assembly members could pay for the food themselves, and so we could spare that money. Ms. Safran stated that was a noble suggestion, but that would be better discussed before approving the next budget. She added that in the current budget, the cosponsorship budget was separate. Mr. Bickford observed that, if the $300 funding is approved, we’ll be taking $140 from next quarter’s budget. Mr. Silberman recommended keeping the smaller value. A vote was taken on the amendment, and the amendment carried. The pending motion was then to fund by $300.

MOTION: to fund the “Butler Chinese New Year” by $300. CARRIED.

At this point someone asked when the event would be held. Ms. Yang stated the Chinese New Year was on January 20th, and that the date of the event had not been set yet.

IV. Reports

> A. CPUC
Brigitta Lee explained that the Council of the Princeton University Community (CPUC) is comprised of students, faculty, staff, and administrators. The council meets three times a semester, and investigates questions related with University policy and community rules. The CPUC has several committees, one of which is the Priorities Committee (PriComm). The previous Monday (December 8), the provost had reported to the CPUC on the committee’s work.

Among the requests under consideration by PriComm, and that have to do with graduate students, are the following: a new assistant dean of the Graduate School for academic affairs (recruitment and retention of minority applicants), increased office time for administrators, increased funding for AI service, furniture in Procter Hall, maintenance of prox-card access, and library acquisitions. Ms. Lee reminded Assembly members that some requests had been brought to some administrators’ attention by the GSG [Minutes 7.9.2003, IV.B]. When PriComm decides on the final recommendations, they will be submitted to the trustees. Ms. Lee added that more information on the requests can be found in the PriComm site.

Mr. Pease added that the PriComm meetings are not over, and that list described by Ms. Lee is not final: it’s only the requests under consideration. He stated that the graduate student attendance in the PriComm public meeting held on November 18 [Minutes 11.12.2003, V.F] had been very good, and thanked all who went there. He added that in January he would provide a more detailed report on the committee’s decisions. Ms. Safran explained that although Ms. Medema and Mr. Pease are our representatives in PriComm [Minutes 4.9.2003, VII], they are confidentiality-bound till the decision process is over. Mr. Pease added that some letters send by the GSG had not been brought to PriComm’s attention and the issues were taken care of in other ways. Ms. Mac Namara clarified that PriComm decides only about additions to the budget, and not about the running budget. Also, only the high administration can submit requests to the committee; we can only ask administrators to ask for something. Some things are easy to solve, and they don’t need to ask PriComm. That had been the case, for example, with the sidewalks [Minutes 10.8.2003, III].

B. Children and Dependents Committee
Ms. Medema introduced Tom Jenkins, vice-chair of the Children and Dependents Committee. This was a new GSG committee [Minutes 10.8.2003, VIII.E]. Mr. Pease observed that McCosh was already doing a lot on health issues, and that the president had recently charged a taskforce with investigating health and wellbeing issues [Minutes 8.13.2003, V.A], including family issues.

Mr. Jenkins stated the committee was working on different issues. One of them was the cost for insuring dependents in the student health plan. As an example, he mentioned that he spent 70% of his income with the apartment rent and the insurance for his two kids. On the other hand, Rachel Kimbro was a member of the committee and was serving on the Taskforce on Health and Wellbeing. The taskforce had funded the committee’s event in the past weekend: committee members were in the different apartment units for donuts and talking. The total attendance was 55 graduate students. The committee got the impression that the University doesn’t have a good sense for how many families there are: the University knows about 37 children, while there 20 living in the same street as Mr. Jenkins. Housing is a year-to-year concern, and health insurance is insufficient (it doesn’t cover well-baby care, and so many doctors won’t examine children). The committee is concerned about the housing draw, for children are allowed to live in some residences only. There are isolated reports of harassment due to students’ family situation (such as negative comments by DGSs and advisors). In the whole, the committee feels the University doesn’t care enough about special groups, such as students with families or international students. The committee is preparing a report, and will provide specific recommendations. Mr. Pease thanked Mr. Jenkins for the report.

Shin-Yi Lin suggested the first effort would be to determine how many people are being affected; maybe some census could be done. Ms. Safran suggested that the housing office would have that information, and there would be the first place to look. As to the health plan, Ms. Esparza observed that Donnell Butler (former chair of the Healthcare Committee) had worked on reducing the cost for dependents. Not only the cost is high, but healthcare for dependents is included in the plans for faculty and staff. Mr. Eastvold asked whether there was a practical action item. Mr. Jenkins stated that the committee was trying to set up a mailing list of students with families. Ms. Esparza suggested that GSG Representatives could help count people in their departments. Mr. Boavida encouraged Mr. Jenkins to come often to the Assembly meetings, and suggested that the committee should always ask for help.
when trying to find the right administrators to talk to, for the GSG already had several contacts within the administration.

Mr. Smith expressed concern about the health insurance issues mentioned by Mr. Jenkins, and suggested that, compared with them, housing issues or the funding of events were unimportant. He encouraged the Executive Committee to get involved with this new committee. Ms. Medema suggested that it was more important that new people got involved with the committees. Mr. Bickford suggested that the GSG could try to conduct a mini-census. Ms. Safran suggested that the details could be discussed in gsg-assembly. Ms. Mac Namara encouraged the committee to try to accomplish the most during the existence of the taskforce, for she thought the taskforce would be working on concrete measures. Mr. Smith suggested that while other committees seemed to have several officers as members, this committee’s work was more important than others’, and officers should be actively involved with it. Ms. Mac Namara stated that it’s more important to have non-Executive members in the committee. She added that Mr. Pease and Ms. Medema were already investing a lot of time in PriComm, and many other officers were chairs of several committees. She thought that the Executive Committee couldn’t be asked to do any more. Mr. Boavida expressed surprise at Mr. Smith’s suggestions: not only all committees had a liaison from the Executive Committee (as had been agreed by Assembly [Minutes 8.13.2003, VI.A, Standing Rule of Assembly II.5]), but this specific issue (healthcare for dependents) had been the main fight of the Healthcare Committee for many years and hadn’t been pursued further precisely because the repeated calls for volunteers in Assembly had never succeeded.

Mr. Bickford asked when the taskforce had been established. Someone answered it had been in September/October. Ms. Esparza said that Ms. Kimbro had told her that students should be happy with the work of the taskforce. Mr. Pease added that the trustees are really interested in having a report by the taskforce.

Ms. Yang stated that there are many children. She added that the chair of the Butler Committee was very interested, and had some statistics. The committee often organizes events targeted at students with children. Ms. Yang suggested that we could try to find what benefits post-docs have.
Ms. Medema stated that the Executive Committee would be in contact with Mr. Jenkins and the Children and Dependents Committee to determine exactly what informations needs to be gathered, and the best way to do it.

C. International Students’ Concerns Committee

Ms. Wijetunge reported on some changes that will affect international students. The office of visa services had already informed all international students.

Till recently, a special registration program was in place for students of some countries (about 10). Those students had to go to the INS offices within 30 days of their arrival to be fingerprinted and photographed for the Special Registration Program (SRT). As the office is far, this was a huge problem.

In the light of recent events, the program was about to be canceled. Starting next January 5, every international student will be fingerprinted and photographed in the port of entry. In the beginning, it will be only in the about 150 major airports, but it will be extended to all possible ports of entry. It was not yet clear whether the SRT would be in place till then.

Ms. Wijetunge asked Representatives to inform their constituents of the changes. All international students would already know, but some people might be confused and it was better if Representatives already knew about it. Ms. Wijetunge stated that the new process was not supposed to be in any way traumatic, but people should expect some delays. The office of visa services is following the changes. Students with questions should be directed to Jennifer McNabb (international graduate student adviser in the office of visa services). Annika Peter asked whether the new program would be coordinated by the department of homeland security, and Ms. Wijetunge confirmed it would be so.

D. Campus Relations Committee

Ms. Lee, chair of Campus Relations Committee, reported on the committee’s recent activities.

Members of the committee had met with Lin Ferrand (associate dean of the faculty), to
discuss ways to tap into the post-doc community. Ms. Ferrand had tried some ideas unsuccessfully. The committee will try a semesterly email (to post-docs) describing opportunities for social interaction in Princeton. Departments with a significant post-doc population would likely be targeted first.

At its last meeting, the committee discussed the possibility of a joint undergraduate and graduate social hour. Of course, there could be no alcohol. The committee will be discussing that idea with the GC House Committee.

Another project the committee wants to pursue is a graduate research symposium [see Ms. Lee’s report in Minutes 11.12.2003, V.B]. At the Washington University at Saint Louis, it is a one day poster session. The symposium is across the whole University, and the presentations are to be accessible to non-specialists. Ms. Lee observed that there was an undergraduate research symposium last year; The committee will try to find out whether a joint event is possible. Ms. Lee will send more details to gsg-assembly, and ask for volunteers. After Ms. Lee concluded her report (that is, in the narrative, after the next paragraph), Mr. Tinsley asked whether the symposium would be open to all disciplines. Ms. Lee said it would be so, and added that at Saint Louis prizes are awarded to the best presentations per division.

Ms. Lee concluded her report by stating that the committee also wanted to get graduate students to know more about student organizations on-campus, especially undergraduate. She would be contacting groups to get information, and bring it to Assembly meetings. This meeting, she told Assembly about Sustained Dialogue, who organizes small discussion groups who meet monthly for dinner, and discuss multi-racial relations. She circulated a flier with a detailed description (a copy of which will be deposited in the archives with these minutes), and asked Representatives to post it in their departments. Alternatively (for people who prefer email), she will send the same information by email.

Mr. Eastvold suggested that a joint social hour would make more sense on-campus, for most undergraduates seem to be either indifferent toward or amused by graduate students, and wouldn’t necessarily go to the GC. Ms. Lee stated that the idea had been presented only in the last committee meeting. However, some committee members are involved in undergraduate groups, and are of a different opinion. Ms. Lee asked for suggestions or
comments to be sent to gsg@. Ms. Safran added that a member of the committee reported finding undergraduate students eating in Procter Hall, and they said that they found it preferable to eating in the undergraduate halls for quality and atmosphere, and so there may be more interested then is usually thought. On the funding issue discussed earlier [see II above], Mr. Eastvold also commented on whether it would be possible to have joint sponsorship (by undergraduate and graduate funds) of groups not specifically identified as undergraduate or graduate. That way, the existence of parallel organizations would be avoided. Someone clarified that although groups must be registered as either undergraduate or graduate, membership is often quite transparent.

E. Housing Committee

Mr. Boavida reported on progress on the housing draw [href="../11/#Vc">Minutes 11.12.2003, V.C]. He stated that currently there were five separate draws for different kinds of housing, which were held at different times. As soon as a student is successful in one draw, all the other applications are dropped. This way, students end up applying to the draws they believe they have more chances at, instead of applying to live where they prefer. About a year and a half ago, the Housing Committee started working on how to simplify the process. The committee had been working on it since then, and the graduate housing policy group (coordinated by the housing office, and with members from all residential committees, the GSG Housing Committee, and the Graduate School) had had several meetings to discuss the new draw. Mr. Boavida stated that he had joined the committee only in August, and so his understanding of the previous discussions might be incomplete.

Mr. Boavida stated that the new draw is best understood as a simplification of the current system. Each student will fill out only one online application, listing up to five choices of housing in order of preference. The possible choices are studio, 1-bedroom apartment, 2-bedroom apartment, 3-bedroom apartment, 4-bedroom apartment, and GC/annex. These possibilities roughly correspond to the current draws; the main difference is that people will be housed according to their preferences, rather than to the timing of the draws. Just as now, people will be randomized within their year of study; current first years will choose first, current second years will choose second, and so on. When it comes each student’s time in
the draw, the system will automatically pick the highest available preference of that student. When expressing a 2-, 3-, or 4-bedroom apartment, single students must list the roommates, and these roommates must apply too. The first of those that is successful draws all others into the apartment. Students with families will be drawn with their families. In the GC, as it can’t be predicted how many roommates a student will need, it won’t be possible for students to list their preferred roommates. So, as in previous years, there will be a GC draw night. All students that will (or could be) successful in the GC will be called according to their draw order to pick their room and roommates (again, as it is now). As to the apartments, housing will allocate them later (as it happens now) within each unit kind. In all cases, space will be reserved for incoming students (and their families) that apply by the deadline and successful hardship applicants. Another change was that (unlike now), incoming singles would be allowed to live in apartments. Mr. Boavida observed that in this system, two students that could apply to a housing unit either as single students or as a couple would have exactly the same chances applying either way, which was also a concern.

Someone asked whether the system would be tested with data from previous years. Mr. Boavida stated that although that had been the intention [Minutes 2.12.2003, IV.F], it had been realized that it wouldn’t be possible, for students had never been given the possibility of expressing several preferences, and so there was no previous data. However, Mr. Boavida suggested that maybe Assembly members could help test the forms (to check whether they are clear and work) and introduce data to test the new system.

Ms. Becher stated that some of her constituents were concerned that the new system would make it more difficult for families to get housing. Mr. Boavida stated that the current policy was to give the same chances to single students and to couples or students with children. That didn’t happen in practice. In fact (as Manish Vachharajani helped Mr. Boavida explain), several years ago the University had hired a consultant to provide a formula on how to allocate housing. However, the formula was based on the statistics at the time, and didn’t produce equitative results today. So, it was indeed easier for couples to get housing nowadays, although that was unintentional.

Ms. Peter asked whether the rank of roommates (for the apartments) would be averaged as before. Mr. Boavida stated that would not be the case: the highest rank would count.
Otherwise, it wouldn’t be possible to rank a student with different roommates in different choices.

F. Report on Public Safety/SHARE Meeting

Ms. Safran stated that she had recently been to a meeting on campus safety. As it was already late, she offered to draft a detailed account, and send it to gsg-assembly.

V. New Business

Ms. Medema asked whether there was any item of new business. Mr. Vachharajani, chair of the GC House Committee, asked Assembly to vote on a request by the House Committee. He reminded those present that Assembly had approved funding the GC “Summer Pizza Parties” [Minutes 6.11.2003, III.B] up to $700. He stated that the GSG traditionally funded one of the GC Summer pizza parties, and it had been so this year. However, the receipts had been submitted three days after the three month deadline [Standing Rules of Assembly, III.4]. He understood that the Executive Committee could not approve an exception, and so asked Assembly to waive the rule and grant an exception. (Although he believed the event was budgeted, it was clarified that that was not the case.)

Ms. Mac Namara moved that the rule not be waived. The rule has existed for long [Minutes 4.10.2002, 5.1], and the House Committee knows about it. The House Committee has a larger budget (she stated later that it was on the order of $40,000/year, as opposed to the GSG’ about $9,000/year, and Mr. Vachharajani agreed that the HC’s budget was approximately of that order of magnitude) and she believed they could support the consequence of their own mistake. Ms. Medema asked whether there was a second, but none was forthcoming.

Mr. Eastvold asked as a point of information whether the $700 had already been spent. Ms. Mac Namara explained that the GSG always disburses funds only after receiving the receipts [Standing Rules of Assembly, III.2], and only up to the amount approved.

Jessica Clark asked whether there was any specific reason for the delay. Mr. Silberman stated that it had been an internal error in the House Committee; a member had been under the
impression that the receipts had already been sent. Ms. Sy added that the event had happened while an interim HC treasurer was in charge. Mr. Eastvold moved to waive the rule and grant the funding. At this point his motion was seconded, as was Ms. Mac Namara’s. Ms. Lin asked whether we could use the money otherwise.

Mr. Vachharajani pointed out that the delay had been only for three days. Ms. Lee observed that the rule was in place to keep people on track, and recommended funding only in part, for there should be some penalty. Mr. Eastvold stated that the funding had been promised, and that 3 days seemed like an administrative detail. Mr. Tinsley favored supporting the request, for the HC had been a long time partner of the GSG, and the delay had been small.

Mr. Bickford moved to fund only by $600. Mr. Pease stated that a vote should first be taken on the current motion, and other motions could be made afterward. Mr. Boavida raised a point of order: after the pending motion was voted upon, the matter was closed and no more motions were in order, so any corrections had to be handled before. As such, he moved to amend Mr. Eastvold’s motion to the effect that this waiver of the rule was an exception not to be repeated. Mr. Pease disagreed in this point, and thus ruled both Mr. Bickford’s and Mr. Boavida’s out of order for the moment being. The motion under consideration was thus to waive the standing rule and grant the full funding at $700. Ms. Sy emphasized that this was a one-time request. Mr. Eastvold took Mr. Boavida’s amendment as a friendly one, and there were no objections.

MOTION: to waive Standing Rule of Assembly III.4 (on the deadline for reception of receipts) on an exceptional basis, and grant full funding to the GC “Summer Pizza Parties”. CARRIED.

Mr. Silberman thanked Assembly...

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business, Ms. Medema adjourned the meeting at about 8:42pm. The next meeting will be on January 14, 2004, at 6pm, in Frist 309.
Submitted 1.5.2004,
João Pedro Boavida Recording Secretary