

Minutes recorded for the January 14, 2009 GSG meeting
Held in Frist Campus Center, Room 309

Agenda

I. Call to Order

A. Approval of the Minutes (December) - Marina Paul

II. Reports

A. Chair - Christina Hultholm

B. Social Events - Yi Wang

C. Facilities - Jeff Dwoskin

D. Health and Life - Kelly Kearney

E. Academic Affairs

F. Campus Relations

G. IRC

III. Guest Speaker Amy Pszczolkowski, Office of Career Services

IV. Decision Items

A. Election Plan

B. Funding request from ACCS

V. Discussion Items

A. Feedback on the new shuttle system

VI. New Business

VII. Adjournment

I. Call to Order

The meeting began at 6:01pm.

A. Approval of the Minutes (December) - Marina Paul

The minutes came up for approval after guest speaker Amy Pszczolkowski discussed upcoming events for Graduate Career Services. A link to a draft of the December 2008 minutes was e-mailed to Assembly last week. No comments aside from major corrections were received. Assembly passed a motion to approve the minutes by voice vote (none opposed, 1 abstention).

Christina Hultholm (Chair) was seated as the new Lawrence Apartments representative to the GSG.

III. Guest Speaker Amy Pszczolkowski, Office of Career Services

Amy P, the Assistant Director of Career Services and a graduate student career counselor, was the guest speaker at the January 2009 assembly meeting. Amy updated Assembly about upcoming changes at Career Services:

1. The Career Services office moved to 36 University Place suite 200 (above the U-Store). It is anticipated that this move will increase student traffic through Career Services.
2. Expansion of hours: the office will stay open to 5:30pm, with the last appointments of the day scheduled from 4:30-5pm
3. Mondays will take both walk-ins and appointments, with extended hours (6-8pm).
4. The Career Services website is being re-vamped. The content is almost ready, and the office is working with the office of communications to get the site online hopefully by Feb. 1. Any feedback from the GSG would be useful.

Amy briefly listed upcoming programs offered through Career services:

1. Academic search programs run year round
2. Workshops including converting the CV to resume for non-academic searches, interviewing workshops, videotaped mock interviews
3. TigerTracks – graduate students must opt-in at the office. Most of listings that are specifically GS are for the non-academic jobs.
4. Alumni career network – career/industry/insider information into companies you're interested in
5. Tiger-NET – larger alumni database; often tapped for speaker events
6. unlimited counseling phone/email appointments are offered to alumni.
7. A three-part career transitions workshop that includes self-assessment, from April 8-22

Q&A

Kevin Collins (Academic affairs co-chair) asked whether some departments are underserved by career services/options. Amy responded “Some departments do a good job of nurturing their students during the job search. We see quite a few Engineering/Sciences, and less of the Humanities/Social Sciences students. We need to make ourselves more aware to grad students, that we are here for them, not just for the undergrads.”

Kevin Collins (Academic Affairs co-chair) described a career fair held by MIT, where employers pay for booths to recruit undergrads. Kevin asked if we have this type of fair. According to Amy, there are several career fairs held at Princeton, however “we are not as large as the MIT's of the world, so we do attract less, but we do have these options”. The general career fair that is held in the fall is attended by approximately 100 employers. The Engineering school runs a Science and Technology fair (for which attendance is down). There is also an internship fair, which Amy believes is more undergrad focused. A non-profit job fair will be held in February.

Silvia asked if government job listings for the students in the Humanities/Social Sciences are available through Career services, including the blue book listings. According to Amy, there are links to this through USAjobs.gov

Silvia suspected that the Science and Technology fair is largely directed to undergrads. In her experience at the previous fair, the recruiters seemed unsure about recruiting grad students and post-docs. Silvia also expressed her surprise at seeing a lack of large, local

companies (pharmaceutical companies for example). Amy responded that getting companies to attend is a challenge because of Princeton's relatively small student population. While there is always an effort to invite these companies, companies have the option of refusing and sometimes do based on the numbers of the students they'll draw.

Kevin suggested that e-mails advertising career services offerings be tailored to separate groups of students, from specific departments or divisions, rather than bulk emails sent to all students. Amy acknowledged that getting the word out in many ways may be a very appropriate thing to do in the current job climate. Hilary Bergsieker (PSY rep) brought up that Princeton classifies Psychology as a natural science, rather than a social science. Hilary felt that many of the career services targeted towards the social sciences would be more pertinent to psychology students than those of the natural sciences. Hilary asked that Psychology students be notified in both cases.

Silvia asked if the new website could provide information/links to job blogs available in various fields. Amy – thought this was a good idea and offered to compile a list.

Amy can be contacted by e-mail: apszczol@princeton.edu

Hilary Bergsieker (PSY rep) asked why graduate students need to enroll in Tiger-Tracks in person, while undergraduate students are automatically enrolled. According to Amy, a previous graduate student was very upset about being automatically enlisted in Tiger-Tracks, so grad students are now given the choice to opt-in.

Hilary then asked whether spouses/partners get access to career services. According to Amy, the official policy is that spouses and partners get only one courtesy appointment with a career counselor. Off the record, she sees them more often and gives phone consultations. Post-docs & employees also only get one.

Christina described the GSG's recent work with the Graduate School and the Association of Princeton Graduate Alumni (APGA) to host informal alumni mixers, and asked if the office of career services works with the APGA to promote interaction between graduate alumni and graduate students. Amy responded that previous mixers were separate from APGA; Amy had recently come in contact with Sandeep Mulgund, a Princeton graduate alumnus and a board member of the APGA, to discuss this April 1 meeting. An upcoming panel discussion with presidents of small liberal arts colleges is being planned. She anticipates this event will be held in the afternoon in Frist or Prospect house.

Amy conveyed that an annual visit to assembly meetings could be used to advertise career services and/or inform the graduate student body of any upcoming changes.

II. Reports

Reports were given after approval of the minutes.

A. Chair - Christina Hultholm

1. Exec received feedback about Tiger Transit, the new shuttle system, via e-mail and is in the process of communicating this to Kim Jackson, Director of Transportation and Parking Services.
2. To garner help with set-up and clean-up during the Winter-Social, a sign-up sheet was passed around during the meeting.
3. Christina and Sandeep Mulgund (APGA board member) are planning another informal alumni mixer. As for the previous mixer, it will probably take place in the GC coffee house.
4. An upcoming CPUC meeting, to take place on Feb 9 at 4:30pm in McCosh 10, will address graduate student issues as well as campus safety/safe walkways.
 - a. The campus safety walks assessed major walkways around campus and made recommendations for improvement. Hilary Bergsieker (PSY rep) asked this information was being taken in to account by the CPUC. Christina relayed that the Provost has said that there is not much money to devote to new things at this time, but would like feedback about unsafe walkways or really critical issues

B. Social Events - Yi Wang – nothing to report.

C. Facilities - Jeff Dwoskin

The housing policy committee reached a decision recently on how many housing priority spots to give to each student residential/advocacy committee. The committee will review the number of spots to grant each committee every year. 7 spots were given to the GSG Exec committee, which currently has 7 members. Jeff pointed out that Butler had its priority spots reduced from 11 to 8.

According to Lisa Schreyer (Assistant Dean for Graduate Residential Life) who is on the housing policy committee, the present number of 7 GSG Exec members was taken into account when making this decision this year. If the number of committee members was increased next year, this would be taken into account and considered during next year's review of the policy.

Annie Twitty (Press Secretary) asked whether the number of students granted housing priorities who actually use their advantage is being tracked. For example, GS2 or GS3 students given priority may have received their housing choices regardless of whether or not they were given housing priority. Dean Schreyer responded that Scott Baldwin, Manager for Graduate Housing, has been keeping track of these figures. Last year, 25 out of 39 students given housing priority were G5 students or higher.

D. Health and Life -Kelly Kearney – nothing to report.

E. Academic Affairs– nothing to report.

F. Campus Relations – nothing to report.

G. IRC – nothing to report.

IV. Decision Items

A. Election Plan

The Election committee outlined the plan for this year's election of the members of the GSG executive committee. Nominations must be received by January 31, 2009.

The IRC had a discussion about allowing rebuttal statements in response to the traditional candidate statements that are posted on the GSG website. Since the candidate statements are submitted before candidates know who they're running against; they can't predict what they want to say. Pablo went to argue that since the website posting of candidates statements has proven to be the most useful way to reach out to the student body, additional information will help inform the voters. The rebuttal statements will also allow candidates to respond to other candidates' impractical ideas. However, the statements could become hostile. In addition, adding additional statements could make the process more complicated.

Assembly discussed the merits of having rebuttal statements, and came up with alternatives:

1. in favor of rebuttal statements - students are more likely to read them than watch a posted video of the meet-the candidates forum
2. Giri Parameswaran (ECO rep) suggested that candidate rebuttals be allowed in the form of second statements.
3. Allowing revision of the original candidate statement. However, revisions would remove facts on the record.
4. private posting of candidate statements, where all candidates could see each others' statements and revise their own, until a final posting date
5. conversations between candidates on-line
6. allow candidates to post additional information with their statement, such as contact information or links to personal website

A discussion ensued about reviewing these additional statements to make sure they are factually correct or appropriate. Pablo informed Assembly that the election committee had voted against censoring or banning submitted rebuttal statements on the basis that banning statements would result in a biased view and would give the election committee selective power.

The following arguments were made in favor of reviewing the rebuttal or second statements before posting:

1. ensuring that information posted on the GSG website was factually correct
2. ensuring that information that is discriminatory is not posted on the website and the GSG is not liable. According to Kevin Collins, we may only be liable if we DO censor our website. Jeff Dwoskin added that the University is responsible and has specific policies in place for this.

Several arguments were also made against the reviewing of rebuttal or second statements:

1. the GSG should uphold free speech in this forum
2. It is the responsibility of the candidates to stand by their words

Assembly discussed whether there should be a limit to the number of responses allowed to candidate statements, since rebuttals would lead to additional discussions.

Several participants in the discussion brought up arguments against this idea:

1. the meet the candidates forum will allow for this back and forth discussion
2. an unending forum may result if there is no limit on the amount of words/number of responses
3. this will generate more work for the election committee, who are already volunteering a lot of their time

Giri made a motion to permit candidates to submit a second statement with the following rules:

1. the requirements for acceptance of the second statement were the same as for first candidate statement
2. the second statement would be posted in addition to first statement, but not replace it.
3. There is no option to review the first statement
4. The deadline will be set by election committee
5. there can be a limit in words/characters to this statement

The motion was seconded and passed by hand vote (12 in favor, 4 opposed).

Several suggestions were made to enable a smooth exec transition:

1. return the password to exec 1 week before
2. old exec could hold an orientation meeting before the transition date
3. Old exec could hold a Q&A session or send out the power-point of the GSG retreat from last year;

Assembly voted in favor of moving the election polling dates one week earlier to the second alternative dates proposed by the Election committee (Feb 25-Mar 4) This would allow old and new exec to have some overlap and the transition to occur more smoothly. The hand vote passed with 10 in favor, 0 against, and 4 abstentions.

Giri moved to accept the amended election plan. The motion was seconded and passed by hand vote with 10 in favor, none opposed, and 4 abstentions.

B. Funding request from ACCS for Spring Festival

ACSS (Association of Chinese Students and Scholars) made a request for \$1200 to fund their Spring Festival Gala celebrating the Chinese New year. The event will be held February 21st at Carl Field Center and will be advertised to all graduate students in advance. Based on previous years, ACSS expects 350 attendees, with approximately 300 graduate students.

The request was originally made to the GSG events board, and requires Assembly's approval because the request is above \$1200. The ACSS routinely requests money from the GSG or GSG Events Board for the annual Moon and Spring festivals.

Thus, ACSS anticipates the event to cost \$1650 but are requesting \$1200 from the GSG, expecting the other \$450 to come from other sources. ACSS representatives (names) clarified that over 60 departments were contacted for funding, 4-5 have offered to give money without specifying dollar amounts. Several departments that granted money for the previous Moon Festival will not give money. ACSS has no plans to look for non-university sources of funding this year.

As of the meeting, Manos (Treasurer) reported that the balance in the GSG Events account was higher than that on this date of last year. Ashley Thrall (Parliamentary Secretary) asked Manos for the Events Board's recommendation. Manos responded that the events board does support granting this increased amount to the ACCS, since the GSG would be awarding the ACSS approximately \$4 per student for an event that has been very successful in the past.

Ashley Thrall (Parliamentary secretary) motioned to grant the request. The motions was seconded and passed by voice vote (14 approved, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions).

V. Discussion Items

A. Feedback on the new Tiger Transit shuttle system

The shuttle committee is scheduled to meet with Kim Jackson, the director of Transportation and Parking Services, next Tuesday at 3:30 pm. Shuttle committee member Hilary Bergsieker (PSY rep) solicited feedback from Assembly to relay to Kim. So far, Hilary has received the following complaints from the student body:

1. drivers leave their stops early
2. on-demand call-in system sometimes sends callers directly to voicemail
3. bus signage has not been consistent

Hilary also updated Assembly on the following upcoming changes to the Tiger Transit system:

1. A new timetable will be announced for the Saturday shopper shuttle either today/tomorrow
2. The GPS tracking system is anticipated to be online in February

Hilary posed a question to Assembly about the timing of shuttles. For example, the trip from the GC to Friend Center is scheduled for 18 minutes but can take up to 28 minutes. There are two options to resolve this. (1) The shuttle can be run every 28 min, making it a less frequent shuttle with some idling at stops but also more reliable in timing. (2) Alternatively, the old schedule can be kept, making it a more efficient transit system but with occasional delays. Hilary asked for preferences or comments from Assembly. One student felt strongly in favor of option 2, where lag times were minimized. Giri Parameswaran (ECO rep) suggested having two schedules to accommodate peak and off-peak hours.

Hilary received additional feedback from Assembly about the new shuttle system :

1. the new Tiger Transit system is an improvement, when it's running smoothly
2. There are wallet-sized maps in shuttle but they are not being advertised to the graduate student body
3. With the anticipated GPS system, the shuttle will be a real improvement over the system in place 6 months ago
4. positive feedback from a student using the Forrestal shuttle. Plasma Physics Laboratory (PPL) staff have been using it to come back/forth on campus.
5. Ashley Thrall relayed that the West Route shuttle is not frequently utilized by graduate students at the GC.
6. One student complained that the Express shuttles were not coming as often as they were scheduled (every 10 minutes). Hilary wondered if signage on the express buses were not being properly displayed.
7. One student wondered why complaints made by borough residents have restricted the shuttle routes, but not those of FedEx and UPS trucks. Hilary replied that the complaints made about the noise generated by the buses used in the previous shuttle system may be what restricted shuttle routes for the new buses. She also informed Assembly that Kim is also trying to get a garage for the shuttles that borough residents are not happy with.
8. Hilary clarified the rules for standing room only: some buses are 30 passenger buses, which should allow standing. If buses are full, a second bus should be sent out.

VI. New Business

No new business was discussed at the meeting.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:35pm.

