

GSG Assembly Agenda
Wednesday 10 June, 6pm

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Minutes
 - a. GSG Assembly, Wednesday 13 May
 - b. Executive Committee Minutes
3. Reports
 - a. Chair
 - b. Academic Affairs Committee
 - c. Campus Relations Committee
 - d. Facilities Committee
 - e. Health & Life Committee
4. Discussion Items
 - a. Summer Letter Writing Campaign
 - b. Mugs
 - c. Summer Social Events
 - d. Outdoor Action

Motion: That the GSG Assembly appoint an Outdoor Action Liaison Officer to encourage and coordinate graduate student involvement in the University's Outdoor Action program.
Moved: Khee-Ghan Lee
Seconded: Giri Parameswaran
5. New Business
6. Close.
Next Meeting – Wednesday 8 July, 6pm, Corwin 127

1. Welcome

- a. The meeting began at 6:11pm
- b. Quorum not met.

2. Minutes

- a. Approval of the minutes for the GSG Assembly meeting held on Wednesday, May 13 2009
 1. A motion to approve the minutes was seconded and passed with none opposed.
 2. Minutes for Executive committee meetings held in May 2009 would be posted shortly.

3. Reports

a. **Chair**

The Chair's report was e-mailed in advance to Assembly

1. Insurance

- Jeff Dwoskin (Facilities co-chair) and others have compiled a list of quotes for insurance packages with a couple of different firms, for residents in apartments. These will be posted on the website.

2. Survey of Graduate Student Body

- The survey of the graduate student body has finally received ethics approval. It will be administered shortly.

3. End of Semester Party ☺

- The End of Semester Party was, by all accounts, a success. Attendance is estimated at around 400.
- Guests appreciated the fact that there were several bar-tenders, which kept waiting times at the bars short.
- There was a surplus of drinks, but obviously this is better than running out too early. Possibility exists to trim back on the amount of alcohol and to purchase better quality drinks.
- Total cost = \$3,932.66 (Combined budget with GCHC = \$4,000)

4. Save the Date

- Ivy Summit: Fri Oct 9 – Sun Oct 11 at Cornell. We will call for nominations in August.

Hope you're enjoying the summer!

Additional concerns brought up:

- a. An Ivy summit planning committee should be formed this fall

b. **Social**

1. Raja Chahal (Social chair) played a video he took at the End-of-Year party
2. Raja felt the choice of DJ worked out well
3. 400 people attended, less purchased wristbands for drinking

c. **Academic Affairs Committee**

1. Summer access to academic buildings: A graduate student complained to the committee that she is not permitted access to Chancellor Green for the summer because she is not affiliated with the department housed inside. The committee will follow up to find out why.
2. Teaching during fellowships: The following concerns was brought up: in order to accommodate students who were not able to teach during their fellowships, one student was not able to teach a course for which the professor specifically requested her as the AI

3. Anonymous email from professor to students about hours required for success in the job market
 - a. A student complained about an email received from his/her outlining the work ethic required for success in academia, and how the current students did not exemplify this work ethic. The student and others at the meeting felt that this opinion 1) was intolerant of choices made by graduate students about their own work hours and 2) may not be valid in the current environment where there isn't enough academic jobs for all students, regardless of their work ethic.
 - b. Assembly discussed bringing this issue up with the graduate school. A concern was raised about keeping the identity of the student secure, given his/her small department/class size.
 - c. Assembly discussed including a question related to the above issue (about the department expectations) on the upcoming graduate student body survey.

d. **Campus Relations Committee**

The Furniture drive was discussed:

- a. Sales from the furniture drive totaled \$3143.80, donated to local charities
- b. Our local furniture drive made news, because the toy guns carried by teenagers on Nassau were stolen from the furniture drive –
- c. Scully didn't receive or sell many items; Facilities insists on our having a tent there
- d. More volunteers were available this year, since staff were eligible to participate
- e. People removed items for sale from tents after furniture drive
- f. While charities were allowed to visit tents any time Wednesday, only 2 of 5 came by; mini-fridges were set aside for charities
- g. A lot of clothing was donated
- h. a lot of non-furniture items were sold – books, clothes, etc
- i. Seniors – e-mails went out to them, flyers in mailboxes; but facilities did not do as promised- arrows to furniture drive
- j. Recommendations for next year:
 - a. Christina Hultholm (Campus relations chair) identified locations where students discarded furniture, and planned to get tents located there in the future.

- b. let's advertise earlier for seniors, then later for grad students
- c. Could we get facilities staff, who move discarded furniture anyway, to transport furniture/donated items directly to tents?

e. Facilities Committee

- 1. Renter's Insurance
- 2. Housing meeting – long term issues – to be addressed later this month
- 3. New GC TV room – AC installment contract about to start – in process of changing engineering plans, need to re-work budget
- 4. Summer schedule for Tiger Transit
 - a. Kim Jackson's (Director of Transportation Services) initial plans for the summer schedule - shuttles would stop at 9pm –
 - b. Reinstated green line – turns out it is most cost-effective method!
 - a. may be able to make this argument in the future if budget cuts are needed
 - c. got Saturday shopper back
 - d. May transition may be difficult because of last minute budget cuts
 - e. TPS tracker – does not label which green line shuttles is going in which direction
 - f. This year's Alumni reunions resulted in a disruption to the shuttles
 - a. This was supposedly a miscommunication – shuttles were supposed to continue running
 - g. Forrestal –students who work at the Forrestal campus met with Kim to complain that the original schedule was not working for them – a new schedule is to begin sometime this summer
 - h. Parking – days of reunion/commencement – cut our parking – no complaints to GSG, but this needs to be planned for advance
 - i. How can we predict and prepare for upcoming snafus?
 - a. Jeff: we're meeting with Kim this summer about the fall schedule
 - b. We'll be meeting with these consultants – giving them data, rather than just feedback from the focus groups, and Kim is encouraging this interaction

f. Health & Life Committee

- 1. Health FAQ update: met with Michelle Gregory; currently working with Jeff Dwoskin (Facilities co-chair) to get this online

4. Discussion Items

- a. Summer Letter Writing Campaign - suggestions
 1. Housing #1 (Current)
 - Promise to maintain at least as many units for graduate housing.
 2. Housing # 2 (Future)
 - Suggest alternative solutions to long term graduate housing plan (e.g. master leasing blocks of units in surrounding areas; offering block plans)
 - Suggest creation of working group including representatives from GSG, grad school, facilities etc. to flesh out options.
 3. Dining – Procter Hall
 - Concern over service cuts – dinner will not be served 2 days a week, voted on by students (chose to cut dinner rather than breakfasts)
 - Broader concern over funding formula for dining halls.
 4. Transportation
 - Rehash various instances of shuttle cuts/unfavorable changes in 2009 – including loss of service during reading week/exam period.
 - continue to request greater consultation
 5. Stipend
 - Request that graduate stipends increase at a rate no lower than the rate of growth of the lowest paid staff.
 - Discussion of stipend benchmarks
 - giving a uniform stipend across students, rather than giving some more/less
 6. Governance
 - Request student representation on all relevant University committees (e.g. committee on strategic planning – which is currently dealing with Hibben/Magie proposal)
 7. Graduate School Social Events and Programming
 - Letter of thanks to grad school, and in particular to Lisa, Olivia and Community Associates for variety of events and initiatives organized for grads.
 8. Career Services
 - Implore University to provide greater information and support for students seeking non-academic jobs.
Esp. important, when faculty/departments feel uninformed about non-academic services – won't help in those cases

Summer internships

- a. Recent change – international students may not take on other (summer) jobs unless related to their thesis work

9. Finance

- Tax-withholding for US citizens/residents
- Request to not disable charges to student accounts during summer.
 - Why turned off at Dillon, or for paying off parking tickets, but not Frist?

10. Travel Funding

- Request an additional \$30k in funding for scholarly travel.
- Stress that this is the only GSG request requiring significant expense by the U
- Note importance of conference participation for job market performance.

11. PriComm/University Budget

- Request that GSG be more involved in decisions about funding cuts.

No objections were made to any items the list. Additional suggestions are welcome – the letters will be written over the summer

Additional concerns about graduate student advocacy were discussed:

1. Increase networking with alumni
 - a. get more involved – Pre-raid, invites to class day
2. Hooding ceremony/graduation
 - a. Only 2 tickets for hooding ceremony are given per student – this is too few to accommodate family and spouses for married students
 - b. Possible solutions
 - i. larger venue for hooding ceremony
 - ii. Splitting the hooding of WWS/MPP/MPA from doctoral students

b. Mugs

1. given out every orientation to incoming students, last year the design was changed
2. Need to place an order again; will 1 month from design to delivery
3. We have 140 in stock – can only afford to get all of one or the other

4. Plan: get in touch with Jorge Cham, producer of PhD Comics to see a custom design for our mug is feasible; otherwise, we re-order last year's white one (straw poll: all but one voter preferred white mug)

c. Summer Social Events

1. Raja Chahal (Social chair) presented the following ideas for summer social events. Raja thinks it is feasible to hold 2 events; 3 events would have to be smaller-scale
 - a. Outdoor movie nights (can include food, drinks, etc) - 200-600\$
 - a. Frist does some kind of movie on the lawn – will look into this
 - b. BBQ (GCHC holds?), family-friendly (water games etc) - 800-1400\$
 - c. Twilight cocktail party (formal, smallish event) - 1000\$
 - d. Luau themed summer party (mojitos margaritas etc) - 1500\$
2. Funding
 - a. \$ 5090 is left in “other events” category of the GSG budget
 - b. We set aside 3K from exec funds, and this includes discretionary/unallocated funds for Ivy summit, \$800 for web software, \$ 1000 for end of year party
 - c. A motion was made to add \$1000 of 2008-2009 surplus to the \$1500 already allocated to summer funds. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions

d. Outdoor Action – Khee-Gan Lee

Khee-Gan Lee (Astrophysics rep) advocated for the creation of a GSG-sponsored position of liaison officer to the Outdoor Action committee. For his full presentation, see [GSG_OA_officer.pdf](#).

- a. The largest event held by the OA is the week-long OA frosh trip; 700/1200 pre-frosh take part
- b. The rest of year, OA activities are basically centered around training leaders for next frosh trip – mostly undergrads who wanted to do this, and the training is mostly done by senior undergraduates
- c. The OA also operates the climbing wall for 2 hours a day (only 2 hours a week for the summer!)

Khee-Gan volunteered to take on the duty of liaison officer; he has been frustrated with lacking avenues for grad student. He felt that he could be more influential in

advocating on behalf of graduate student with the weight of the GSG rather than acting as an independent body.

Assembly discussed the liaison officer's roles:

1. Officer should report to Health and Life committee; but some activities may fall under purview of Campus Relations.
2. perhaps the GSG should have more liaison positions to address specific issues

The following motion was brought forth by Khee-Gan Lee:

Motion: That the GSG Assembly appoints an Outdoor Action Liaison Officer to encourage and coordinate graduate student involvement in the University's Outdoor Action program.

Additions to original motion: 1. the officer shall give regular updates to the Health & Life committee

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

5. New Business

No new business was discussed at the meeting.

6. Close.

- a. A Motion adjourned the meeting at 7:41pm.
- b. The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 8 July, 6pm, Corwin 127