

Minutes for the March 29 GSG Meeting

Eszter Hargittai, GSG Chair, brought the meeting to order at circa 6pm. Members of the Assembly were asked to introduce themselves for the benefit of our guests. Stephen Kieran and Amy Floresta from the Kieran - Timberlake Architectural firm and George Olexa, Assistant Director of Physical Planning were guests at the March 29 GSG meeting. Nora Orendahl, an APGA board member, also was present.

Item 1: Approval of the Minutes

The Minutes, authored by Steven Miller, were unanimously approved by the GSG Assembly as the Attendance sheet circulated.

Item 2: The Future of the Princeton Graduate College.

George Olexa furnished introductory matter. He mentioned the decision by the Wythes Committee to increase the undergraduate enrollment.

% George Olexa stated that Wythes Committee representatives have already spoken with undergraduates about suitable living environments. He then remarked that "we had always intended to talk to the graduate population".

@ This had already begun at the previous House Committee Meeting. It had been learned that the New Graduate College housing was considered a comparatively undesirable housing option, while the Old Graduate College furnishes a sense of identity and provides an important social venue for graduate students.

George Olexa asked for the Assembly members to supply their own perspectives. In requesting input, he initially appeared to be more interested in learning from the Assembly about possible GC alternatives than asking the GSG about its position on the GC itself. Ultimately, however, our visitors invited discussion on the status of the Graduate College.

% Jason Brownlee expressed concern about the extent to which the Wythes Committee's decision to raise the undergraduate enrollment and interest in graduate housing alternatives were connected events. He also asked that the questioning not be phrased in a way that made it appear as though graduate students were solely considering

GC alternatives.

% Eszter pointed out that in recent years the GC has been filled quite to capacity. She suggested that the matter not be restricted only to two options, graduate students staying or not staying in the GC. Instead, Eszter encouraged the consideration of an option in which graduate housing might be improved by retaining the GC as a graduate housing option while considering improvements to graduate housing beyond the GC.

% Nora pointed out that the Graduate College is unique as a symbol of the Graduate Student Body at Princeton, and its counterpart doesn't exist anywhere on campus. When the Assembly was polled on this point, there was a strong note of agreement with Nora's assertion. Cindy Tobery extended the point by praising the gothic beauty of the Graduate College buildings and grounds.

Another member of the Assembly spoke of the multidisciplinary and cross - cultural interaction that takes place at the graduate college, a trait perceived by him as unique both to Princeton and to graduate students in general.

% Stephen Kieran, speaking hypothetically, wondered how graduate students might receive an alternative to the Graduate College identical to the GC, except equipped with apartment style housing. When asked where the new building would be placed, the same question was directed toward the Assembly. Would a location closer to campus be desirable?

% Jim Vere voiced a preference for dormitory type housing. He cited a limited need for space in his case, and praised the enhanced social interaction encouraged by the dormitory environment.

% Beverley McKeon spoke, arguing that at least initially, the GC has a strong appeal for international students. Indeed, the living units of the GC solve many problems for students arriving from other countries trying to arrange living spaces and furniture from overseas.

% Eszter said that one virtue of the GC is that it provides students with a chance to develop ties with students beyond their departments. What's more, she said, even after moving beyond the GC, students still rely on the friendships

developed at the Graduate College during their years at Princeton.

% When asked for a show of hands by those who had (or were) living at the GC, hands appeared from a clear majority of the Assembly.

% When the Assembly was asked about the suitability of the graduate college, Steven Miller expressed agreement with the viewpoint of Dean West. Steve portrayed the seclusion and calm serenity of the GC's location as a positive quality.

Another student remarked that the Debasement Bar might not be able to exist if graduate students were quartered closer to the central part of the Princeton Campus.

% A member of the Assembly expressed skepticism that undergraduates could occupy the GC in a smooth manner after such a lengthy tradition of occupation by graduate students. Indeed, recalling his own experience as an undergraduate, an Assembly member declared "If I were an undergraduate, I would not want to live in a dorm that had been inhabited by graduate students."

% One of the architectural/physical planning staff stated that if graduate student groups interviewed had expressed strong dissatisfaction with the GC dormitory style housing, then the policies being formulated by the Wythes Committee would have been affected. However, he conceded that graduate students have spoken very highly of the Graduate College as a residence hall and social center.

% It was pointed out by one of our guests that the GC has only recently been fully subscribed. In previous years, some of the rooms were vacant.

% It was suggested by a member of the Assembly that the recent renovation of the Graduate College may have been a factor in its sparse occupation in previous years.

Toward the end of the dialogue between the Assembly and its guests, the discussion shifted toward concerns beyond the Graduate College.

% Nathan Marsh mentioned that, except for brief discussion on replacing some of the Butler units with two story apartments,

relatively little has been done recently to learn from the Butler residents means of improving the Butler system.

% Eszter conceded that the graduate students certainly have the options of Lawrence, Butler, and Hibben-Magie. However, she said that these are distinguished from the Graduate College by the lack of a community built around them. Ann Morning spoke soon afterward saying that even with improved community spaces, the apartment systems would not be greatly improved. The difficulty, Ann said, is the simple fact that residents of the apartments have relatively little in common.

% When asked by our guests about the Campus Center, it was conceded by a member of the Assembly that the Frist Campus Center will be welcomed by graduate students as a beneficial addition to Princeton. However he emphasized that the Frist Center will complement, but not replace, the Graduate College.

Our guests mentioned that the Trustees would meet to reach concrete decisions on April 15, and again toward the end of the academic year.

Our visitors were thanked, received a round of applause from the Assembly, and retired. The Assembly received a 2 minute recess to consume pizza, and the meeting resumed.

Item 3: Committees and Project Reports

CPUC: Eszter encouraged anyone interested to run for a CPUC position. <At the time of writing, elections have been scheduled for the next GSG meeting on Tuesday, April 25.>

Healthcare: Cesar Rosado has volunteered to give time to the hefty task of organizing the Healthcare Survey data into a form that can be readily analyzed.

Post-enrollment: Kyle Morrison furnished the report. News had been obtained from Dean Redman. With regard to post-enrolled students, Kyle explained, the Graduate School tends to review matters on a case by case basis. Funding is sometimes granted to these students.

Eszter suggested that the next step is to obtain, in writing and in detail, an explanation of why post-enrolled students do not receive the benefits they don't. Although this has been explained to members of the Post-enrollment Committee several times in meetings, the story has been very intricate and

difficult to retell. Having the explanation in writing would allow us to know the specifics of the issue and why the post-enrollment status is so difficult to address.

Campus Safety: The Campus Safety Committee has met. Cindy circulated a report summarizing its conclusions. Two items seemed to be salient and received broader discussion in the Assembly.

The first is the proposal to install traffic circles on faculty road. It is thought that the circles will enhance safety for those crossing Faculty Road.

The second is a concern about bicycle safety. The committee has determined that, for safety reasons, cyclists should wear helmets and be careful to abide by traffic regulations.

Ivy Leaders conference: Manuel Sales volunteered to attend the meeting at the University of Pennsylvania during the last weekend of March.

Item 4: Report of the Social Chair

A Spring Fling had been scheduled for Friday, April 7 at Hibben-Magie. The Fling was to take place between 9pm and 12am.

The first week in April is Graduate Student Appreciation Week. As has been customary during the past several years, it was expected that ice cream would be served on the afternoon of Friday, April 7.

A battery of three APGA socials had been planned. The first was to be held at the Graduate College on April 7, while the next two were scheduled for April 14 and April 15. The hope was to advertise the upcoming centennial APGA reunions to current graduate students.

Item 5: Report of the Treasurer

Since Karthick was in absentia, Lauren Hale presented the Treasurer's Report and the associated funding requests.

% The first request was made by the Women's Center. The Center requested and received \$75 toward the event. As Cindy explained, the event would be held on April 11 and would consist of a dinner with Dean of the Faculty, Joseph Taylor,

present. The Assembly was informed that faculty hiring and women faculty would be the topics of the meeting.

% The GSLA (Graduate Students for Local Activism) requested \$75 from the GSG to fund a Dental Care campaign event. The event was to take place on April 14 between 12pm and 2pm. The plan was for the event to highlight the lack of dental care on campus. As a humor device, the event organizers intended to distribute lollypops to passersby. The Assembly voted to supply the requested \$75 after a brief period of discussion.

Item 6: New Business

Eric Adelizzi and Steve Miller suggested that the GSG consider investing some of its surplus funds in the Princeton endowment.

% The GSG presently has \$3200 in surplus funds in the bank.

% Following the example of the Graduate College House Committee, Eric and Steve recommended that the GSG invest \$2000 of its surplus in the University endowment.

% Extrapolating present growth rates, Steve and Eric conservatively estimate that within 12 years the GSG's investment would be returned to the GSG in the form of interest.

% The endowment is set up in such a way that the GSG receives 4.5% of the interest on the current principal. The remainder of the interest is added to the principal.

% Although it is difficult to forecast future endowment growth rates, Steve and Eric deemed it reasonable to assume a growth rate of between 10% and 20%.

% The proponents of the investment argued that it is essential to provide for long term fiscal needs. As an example, the GSG fee has not been increased adjusted to match inflation, and raising the fee is not an easy task. However, the investment may eliminate the need to consider fee hikes.

% Matt Moore reminded the GSG that, as with any

investment, careful consideration should be given to the risks involved. It is difficult, he said, to know the future. Suppose, the endowment doesn't grow as swiftly as hoped?

As the discussion ended, the matter was put to a vote. The Assembly decided in favor of proceeding with the investment.

Item 7: Adjournment

The meeting adjourned shortly before 8pm following discussion on when to hold the next meeting. Ultimately, April 26th was tentatively chosen.

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The next GSG meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 25th in the Office of Population Research at 8:30pm. In the meeting, the graduate CPUC representatives will be elected. Assembly members are urged to attend and vote for these important posts.

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