



GSG Assembly Meeting
October 12, 2016 5:45pm

The meeting is called to order at 5:50pm.

Strategic Plan of the Graduate School

Dean Sanjeev Kulkarni presents on the recommendations of the task force for the future of the graduate school.

- Dean Kulkarni:
 - How many have heard of the strategic plan?
 - One third yays.
 - Thirteen or fourteen task forces were launched a couple of years ago, with one focusing on the graduate school. Task force on the graduate school posted report last July.
 - Graduate school is not just instrumental (by playing a role in undergraduate education). Quality of the graduate school, faculty body, and academic reputation drive undergraduate reputation. Intrinsically, the graduate school attracts the best faculty, drives international reputation, is critical in research and in educating the next scholars, educators, researchers and leaders in, and outside academia.
- Recommendations from the task force:
 - Size: the last report (Weiss report) suggested that the graduate school would not need to grow, which led to speed bumps whenever departments wanted to expand. New report suggests graduate school has to grow. Strongest competitors award more PhDs per faculty.
 - Funding: there is a decline of sponsored research in science/engineering, which puts pressure on students to finish. A new graduate school initiative (>\$1 million) matches costs for advisors who sponsor research in the last years of a student's degree. In the humanities and social sciences, students are typically supported by the University. The challenge here is time to degree, as median time-to-degree goes beyond typical support commitment. A new \$2 million initiative will help

support students in the humanities and social sciences departments in a 6-th year - about 40 fellowships will be available.

- Space: % of graduate students vs. number of faculty show that Princeton has a very small graduate student body relative to the size of the University, but also a small faculty pool overall. Need to leverage uniqueness of Princeton, and one of the main considerations will have to do with housing.
- Professional development: placement varies by division (but Princeton does comparably to Ivy+ peers). Progress on this front includes hiring a new Assistant Dean for Professional Development, Amy Pszczolkowski. Amy is being replaced by Susanne Killian as the dedicated graduate career advisor.
- Questions:
 - Mircea Davidescu (GSG President): I'm curious about recommendations to grow the number of graduate students. Do you see any tension between that goal and changes in marketplace (i.e. availability of jobs)?
 - Dean Kulkarni: Growth would be driven by growth of faculty in certain areas, presumably those where there is also growth in research and therefore growth in jobs. This is also why professional development is important. Some departments are willing to reduce the size of their cohorts to improve support for the students they do have.
 - Michelle Frazer (AOS Rep): Regarding expanding support - in programs which are technically 4 years, there is some concern that increasing the length of programs would imply reducing the size of the cohort. Has that been considered?
 - Dean Kulkarni: These programs often want to be 4-year programs, because: 1) it's appropriate from an academic point of view, 2) when students go on DCE, the cost to the PI goes down because tuition charge drops. With the new program for providing matching research funds I would not be surprised if some of these programs wanted to move to a 5-year program. We are open to it - more open to it in engineering and science specifically, because they're funded externally.
 - Bu Chan Yong (East Asian Studies Rep): Many international students on fellowships such as Fulbright are not allowed to do a bank year funding - students pay Princeton from their fellowships funds, so the student is not receiving any direct support from Princeton.

- Dean Kulkarni: We are not aware of this issue. I'm interested in hearing more about this.
- Michael Zhang (Art and Archeology Rep): Regarding professional development - teaching experience is paramount for academia. Will there be more opportunities to have experience and training?
 - Dean Kulkarni: We've already started collaborative teaching for students in the humanities. We're also looking into collaborating with community colleges, and we're starting a course on scholarly approaches to pedagogy that will begin this Fall. Let us know of other ideas.
 - Jonathan Balking (GSG Comms. Director): Is the collaborative teaching just for students in the humanities?
 - Dean Kulkarni: At the moment, I believe so.

Review and Approval of September 2016 Minutes

Will Smith (Politics Rep) motions to approve, Robert Decker (French & Italian Rep) seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.

Budget Presentation, Discussion, and Approval

Max Hirschberger (GSG Treasurer) presents on the budget.

- The goal is to get Assembly's input on what you would like to see, and hopefully get approval.
- The GSG has four accounts:
 - GSG main account - income from student fees (\$46,189 next year)
 - Events Board - co-funded with PU (\$7,500, \$3,500 from VPCL, \$5,000 from GS), and used to fund events from graduate student groups.
 - Ivy+ Summit savings account: savings balance \$6,353.01. The Ivy+ Summit is a summit for graduate student governments from Ivy+ schools to discuss best practices, and it comes to Princeton every 7 years, which is why the savings account exists.
 - Endowment savings account: book value of \$9,034.01.
- The main points of spending are: events board, writing days, endowment deposit, special events, orientation, social, infrastructure & discretionary (includes new initiatives such as last summer's fitness program), Ivy Summit.

- We have about \$2,000 leftover from previous year.
- Changes for this year's budget:
 - Student fee increase (\$16.00 to \$16.50) as adjustment for inflation
 - Extra one-time contribution to events board of \$2,5000
 - Special events budget increase (\$1,000)
 - Orientation budget decrease (\$400)
 - Monthly pub night for social decrease (\$400) - partnering with Postdoctoral Council
 - Outreach fund decrease (\$800) since interdepartmental mixers are now covered by events board
 - Discretionary fund increase (\$500)
 - Ivy+ Summit funding increase (\$250)
- Events Board: the budget was \$16,000, but received applications for more than \$32,000 last year. VPCL agreed to increase annual contribution by about \$2,5000/year (to \$6,000). Graduate School also agreed to match a one-time payment from the GSG up to \$2,500).
- Questions:
 - Yuan Shi (PPPL Rep): The actual spending was less than the budgeted for discretionary. What was it used for and why do you need to increase it?
 - Max (GSG Treasurer): Last year we had \$1,000 of discretionary funds. We organized a fitness series, which cost about \$600.
 - Mircea (GSG President): Discretionary funding provides more flexibility for spontaneous events. We ran into problems several times where we thought we should do a certain program, but we had no budget to pull from.
 - Max: Another example was the Freedom BBQ, for which we had to move funds around from various budgets.
 - Robert Decker (Italian & French Rep): What determines whether an event is funded through the events board or discretionary funding?
 - Max: For events board, there needs to be a group which is registered with the GS.
 - Mircea: To clarify, the GSG cannot apply for events board funding (rather, the GSG contributes funding to the events board).

- Lily Secora (Graduate School): Individual graduate students can also apply for events board funding.
 - Max: To summarize, discretionary is for events organized by the GSG, the rest is for groups or individuals independent from us.
- Michelle Frazer (AOS Rep) motions to approve the budget, Vivian Chang (WWS Rep) seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

Graduate Housing Project Presentation

Akil Daniels (GHP): We have analyzed most of the data from the April survey. We are currently preparing the report, which we will be sending to people from the survey center and key administrators to get their recommendations (hopefully next week). We will then send an online version for Assembly to comment on in about two weeks.

- Laura Bustamante (Neuroscience Rep): What is covered in the report?
 - Akil: What are the percentages of students in housing, how many want to stay in housing, how this affects academic and campus life. It also covers things housing could be doing better, such as communication, and emphasises concerns of students with families, which are often unique.
- Mircea Davidescu (GSG President): Once it is sent out for comments from Assembly, would you prefer to have a vote of approval electronically, or to vote at the next assembly meeting?
 - Akil: If it's finalized and can be done electronically, there should be no problem with that.

Recruitment

- Graduate Student Career Fair
 - Vivian Chang (WWS Rep) has been leading the charge on this and organizing the team.
 - Vivian: Last year we had the first graduate student meeting, and will have another on November 16th (from 11am to 2pm in Frist). Both academic and non-academic jobs will be featured. You should all attend and we need help in two areas:
 - We need volunteers the day of
 - We're working on outreach to companies to bring them in. Career services

has a list of 1000 companies that they reach out to, but we also want to bring in new employers, so that requires a personal touch.

- Mircea Davidescu (GSG President): would you prefer a core team, or to have one person handle one company:
 - Vivian: we would like to have as many people as possible.
- Michelle Frazer (AOS Rep): Are the companies we'd get the ones you solicited from us last month? Could I contact the ones I recommended?
 - Vivan: Sure, that would be perfect.
- Volunteers should contact Vivian at vivianc@princeton.edu
- Transportation and Parking Committee
 - Mircea: About 5 graduate students wanted to discuss and review changes to future T&P policies.
- Committee to Recommend a Marker of Wilson's Legacy (1 student)
 - Managed by VPCL, and has to do with ongoing discussion about names of buildings on campus and the climate that they create.
 - David Walsh (History Rep): Are they looking for someone in the GSG or any graduate student?
 - Mircea: It could be any graduate student, and that applies to all these committees.
 - Michelle (AOS Rep): Could someone in Exec prepare a write-up that we could distribute?
 - Mircea: Yes, we can definitely do that.
- USLC student members
 - Genna Gliner (GSG Facilities Chair): University Student Life Committee, led by VP Rochelle Calhoun, is chaired by GSG (Genna) and USG representatives. The committee discusses issues regarding student life, and hopes to act as umbrella organization to make things happen. Topics include mental health issues, arts practice spaces, first generation resources, bystander programmes, among others. We're recruiting new student members to sit on that committee. It meets once a month and the first meeting is next week, October 19th, from 4pm to 6pm at a central campus location.
 - Interested people should contact Genna at genna@princeton.edu
 - Next week's meeting will focus on:

- Gender neutral housing policy proposal
 - University board plan review (for us, that means the meal plan - no proposal yet, but looking at comprehensive revamping of meal plan structure).
- Young Alumni Trustee Committee
 - Akshay Mehra (GSG Vice-President): We have had this on the horizon for a while, and it's picking up steam now. New young alumni trustee wants to get graduate students involved. Every year, graduating students elect someone to sit on the board, and it rotates every four years. Currently, we have no graduate young alumni trustees. Last one joined 20 years ago, so might be out of touch.
 - Akshay: We have been told by APGA that board members on the board will not advocate for a young graduate trustee, unless there's some ground swell, so that would be the goal of this effort.
 - Interested people should email akmehra@princeton.edu
 - David Walsh (History Rep): Did APGA say why?
 - The one grad Board of Trustees member was just elected, so she thinks we can't make a case unless we can make a point for it.
 - Mircea: Last time they considered a board expansion, they decided against it.
 - Julia Wittes (MoBio Rep): Princetonian published an article advocating for having undergraduates on the Board of Trustees, so if that happens we should use it as leverage.
 - Mircea: Especially since the argument was that the board was too big.
 - It was only an opinion piece, and is not likely to happen, however.

Executive Summary

- Ivy+ Summit 2016
 - It was held at Brown.
 - Unionization
 - Peer governments have chosen to remain neutral
 - At some peer institutions (such as Yale) there have been issues with how the process to move towards unionization has developed. They explained it as 3 camps: grads who don't want a union, grads who want the union

- selected, and grads who want a union, but not the one chosen.
 - At Cornell, there was a memorandum of understanding between administration and union reps. Union reps cannot go into labs, for example. Professors cannot discuss unionization with undergraduates. It seems to be working well.
- Resources and sharing best practices
 - Learned a lot about branding and how to improve outreach, which we will try to adopt
 - At Yale, they have a dedicated app for graduate students
 - At MIT, they've set up RFAS (reducing friction and stress) which consists of peer-to-peer advice for conflict mediation
- Dartmouth recently became a graduate school, rather than a department of graduate studies
- At MIT, students are automatically subscribed to course that allows them to provide anonymous feedback on advising.
- Graduate Housing Advisory Board (10-07-2016)
 - Genna Gliner (GSG Facilities Chair): GHAB is a group of student representatives from the housing complexes (GC, Lawrence, Lakeside) who meet with housing administrators to plan for the rest of the year.
 - Over the next couple of months, will be discussing policies about housing: assignment process, room draw, policy documents regarding housing.
 - Question: Is committee open to non-GSG members?
 - Genna: No, but you can bring up any concerns to your housing representative.
 - Can one write to you on behalf of a fellow graduate student?
 - Genna: It's helpful to have the individual who experience issues to email these stories to gsg@princeton.edu, so we can use them to highlight concerns.

Open Forum

- Akshay Mehra (GSG Vice-President): We have no active off-campus delegate, and Sarah Marie Bruno has expressed interest in filling the position.
 - Yuan Shi (PPPL): What's the difference between off-campus delegates and other delegates

- Akshay: Off-campus delegates cover all students who are not in graduate housing
- Sarah Marie Bruno: Graduate student in Physics living off-campus. Noticed that there was no current delegate, yet off-campus students are less centralized, and I think there needs to be a push to advertise events to those students to make sure everyone is included in the wider graduate student community.
 - Yuan Shi (PPPL): How are you planning to connect with off-campus students?
 - Sarah: Having a listserv would be great, and my email would also be available on the GSG website. As things continue, we can find out what works best.
- Jack Murphy (Geosciences Rep) motions to approve, Robert Decker (French & Italian Rep) seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

William Smith (Politics Rep) motions to adjourn the meeting. Robert Decker (French & Italian Rep) seconds. The meeting adjourns at 6:47pm.

Next meeting: November 9th, 2016 5:45pm