



GSG Assembly Meeting
Jadwin 102
June 14, 2017 5:45pm

The meeting is called to order at 5:51pm.

Approval of the May Minutes

The approval of the May minutes was skipped, because we did not have a complete quorum of Assembly members.

Housing Summit Review

- Mai Nguyen (Facilities and Transportation officer): For people who don't know, we had a housing summit with forty or fifty students. This effort was largely spearheaded by Mochi, who is going to talk about it.
- Mochi Liu: A few weeks ago, we got students together in Frist to talk about both the GHP report and to hear testimonials. Four breakout groups: housing operations, housing stock, spouse and family issues, and off-campus housing. Very positive energy, a lot of people showed, and a lot of people have very strong feelings about graduate housing, as they should. The big question for all of us is: what's next?
- Mai: Before & during the housing summit, GSG et al have been meeting with the housing office to talk about issues that came up in this and previous draws: bad communication, contradictory information, emails that get variable answers depending on who you ask. We're really excited about the new Housing Retreat, which has been organized *by the Housing Office*, and will give us a chance to give direct feedback on how housing policy and operations work, followed by breakout sessions to talk about policy, operations, communications, and how to address student satisfaction. Last summer, there was a big survey of students that generated a lot of complaints, and we feel that the housing office should be doing these surveys regularly. We feel like this is a really big opportunity: almost everything is on the table. Housing stock and rent are off the table, because they're outside the scope of the housing office. However, lots of policy issues are open for discussion.
- Jonathan Balkind (GSG president): The things that we suggest aren't necessarily all going to be implemented -- they're just recommendations.
- Mai: The point is to make recommendations for what we would like the system to look like.

- Jon: These recommendations will be considered at high levels, though.
- Mai: We hope this will be a year-long process, and we'll keep working on these issues. Recommendations and priorities might not be implemented, but this is a big opportunity for us to communicate our priorities and needs to the housing office. If you're interested in participating, please email Mai as soon as possible.
- Robert Decker (French and Italian representative): Where is this going to take place?
 - Mai: It's going to be on-campus (it's an in-house retreat). There will be food, and you can step out if you need to.
 - Olivia Martel: It's going to be in the Simpson building, so close.
- Robert: Can you clarify who sets housing stock and rent costs?
 - Mai: The cost of housing is set by the trustees; the graduate school has said they're looking to increase the stock of graduate housing, and they're looking at a site south of Lake Carnegie, but that's a long ways away.
- Jon: We want to have representation from students with diverse experiences. We'd love to have someone who does long-term fieldwork and then comes back and gets shut out of housing. We want people outside the "standard" category of staying on campus for five years, single, etc.
- Mai: International students, people with kids, MA students, WWS PhD students
- Mochi: It seems like this should be a continuous conversation -- maybe this can happen again in the fall, when people are actually around?
 - Mai: These breakout committees will be formed as 12-month work groups. This will be an ongoing process.
- Siddharth Mishra Sharma (Physics representative): This is going to be open to everyone? Why aren't you advertising this to the whole student body?
 - Jon: There are constraints on how many people can fit in the room and how many people we can feed.
 - Mochi: Can't you open this up to everybody and then have folks RSVP and create a waitlist?
 - Mai: I started with Assembly and GHP because it's a full-day project and it's going to be a big commitment.
- Joshua Wallace (Astrophysical Sciences representative): Is this open to people who aren't students, like are married to or partnered with students?
 - Mai: We've had this problem already with GHAB.
 - Olivia: So, when GHAB does the hardship housing evaluation, there's a lot of privileged information, we keep that students-only because it's sensitive material. But for this, it would make a lot of sense to have spouses on the committee.
- Joshua: Why are Princeton students trusted with information that non-Princeton students are not?
 - Jon: It's basically that the university has the capacity to censor you if you share

sensitive information.

- Mai: I think it's also a requirement that voting rights are limited to people who are affiliated with the university.
- Olivia: We're always open to feedback, but maybe there will be sensitive information discussed? We're always, always open to feedback from families and partners, and we want to be as welcoming as possible, but sometimes we're limited in certain ways from including spouses and partners in every facet of the experience.
- Akil Word-Daniels (GHP): are you expecting there to be confidential information released at this meeting? Can we pose this question to the housing office?
 - Olivia: I don't know, I'm not running it, but you can totally ask the housing office.
- Mohammad: Do you have a schedule? I can't commit to the whole day.
 - Mai: We have an informal schedule, with the morning being background discussion and setting up the breakout sessions, and the afternoon is meetings. If you can only make the breakout sessions, that would be enough. Lunch is from 12-1. Breakout sessions are 1p-3p, followed by wider discussion; if you could only come for 2 hours, be there from 1-3. Email me as soon as possible if you want to participate.
- Mochi: What are the breakout sessions?
 - Mai: Policy review, operations, communications/customer service, and how should the ongoing assessment of housing satisfaction go. Lunch discussion is about community building.
 - Jon: They are interested in doing a regular survey, probably a little after the housing draw happens.
- Mochi: You're not sending an email blast to campus?
 - Jon: We're going to check with the housing office first.
 - Mai: To be clear, this is not going to be a complaint session.
 - Mohammad: A good number of people *have* had issues, and if they have problems, they should bring them.
- Jon: The idea is that we'll set out the idealized system that the office should be operating under, and then work on working out how things could work better.
- Mohammad: But people with actual complaints should come, because they've been exposed to the actual failure of the system.
- Mai: Yes, but this has to be people who are willing to engage with administrators in a sustained, productive way.
- Akil: This meeting is more about setting up a framework for future discussion. I definitely see the concerns, but I think it would be better if we had core people setting priorities and then organizing the request for comments on policy proposals.

- Jon: Yes, we will send the global email out.

Executive Summary

- Jon: Traffic safety improvements. We've heard from two students who have been hit by cars/been in accidents at the Lakeside traffic circle in the April-May period. We did a safety walk with Public Safety in 2015. We'd had complaints about the roundabout, but without much movement. After talking to Public Safety, they went back to the architect, and they made recommendations for improvements in signage, striping, and lighting, as well as implementing a flashing light system at the boathouse crossing. We're pretty pleased that it seems like the recommendations are being taken seriously.
- Robert: Has there been any discussion about improving crossing safety on Nassau? I'm thinking specifically about the crosswalk right by Nassau. Has there been any talk about putting up flashing lights?
 - Mai: Transportation is bringing in consultants for the new campus plan, and they want to improve biking and walking accessibility. That crossing didn't come up in the discussions, and part of the problem has to do with Princeton-the-university versus Princeton-the-township. The other one that always comes up is the crossing on Alexander going to the GC, which is exactly where the university ends and the town begins.
- Jon: We're going to have another safety walk in the fall.
- Mai: One thing that came up was that the consultants didn't believe that graduate students ever went up to Nassau, because apparently undergrads never do that.

Graduate Experience Survey

- Jon: One thing we were wondering is if it would be useful would be to run a graduate experience survey, to work out where there is room for improvement, and where things are going well. We've been thinking about talking to VP Calhoun about this. We wanted to gather thoughts and feelings about this -- where should our advocacy go? Are there some specific problems that should be targeted, or departments that are particularly troubled?
- Mai: Is this separate from Kate's academic satisfaction survey?
 - Jon: Yes. The academic survey was just for Kate's data gathering purposes. This is more directed towards long-term advocacy.
- Brian Kraus (Plasma physics representative): So, you're suggesting something really freeform, with long written answers instead of multiple choice, because that limits responses. The challenge, though, is that you might get way too much variable data.
 - Jon: I worked on the calendar reform survey, and so I have some ideas about how to make sure the questions we ask are structured but also unbiased.
 - Mai: I'd see this as an expanded version of what we do in re-enrollment, but

broader, and not every year. (Avoid survey fatigue)

Open Forum

- Robert: What's going on with calendar reform?
 - Jon: A few months ago, Eisgruber recommended setting up an ad hoc committee to figure out what the calendar we'd propose to the faculty would look like. This is essentially up to whoever turns up to the all-hands faculty meeting to vote on it. The committee is just trying to gather information on all the different ways this will potentially impact the university community (things like child care, for instance).

Robert Decker (French and Italian) motions to adjourn meeting. Brian Kraus (Plasma Physics Rep) seconds. The meeting adjourns at 6:31 pm.

Next meeting: We will hold an electronic vote to determine whether we should have a physical meeting in July. Please pay attention to your email!