Jonathan Balkind  
Candidate for Priorities Committee

Every year, the Priorities Committee makes a number of important decisions regarding the university's budgetary priorities. Over my last year as GSG President, trying to push for improvements to conditions for graduate students with children, I have become increasingly interested in the Priorities Committee and how they deliberate regarding graduate student interests. Prior representatives have told me that they felt graduate students' interests weren't discussed enough and this is something that I would also hope to push for. If elected to serve as a graduate student representative on the committee, I will serve as a strong advocate for the interests of those in our community who are most in need. One particular change I would like to see is an increase to the SCCAP benefit given to graduate students with children such that it becomes tied to inflation, like our stipends. Childcare nationally has increased in cost by 35% over the last ten years, but the benefit has remained static. This means that parents have received a real terms decrease in the benefit every year since its introduction!