Daniel Cooney  
Candidate for Academic Affairs Officer

To introduce myself, I am a third-year grad student in the Program for Applied and Computational Mathematics (PACM), and am currently the program representative for PACM in the GSG assembly. I am running for Academic Affairs officer because I am interested in expanding opportunities and funding for interdisciplinary research and educational collaborations in the graduate school.

As an applied math student with an advisor in ecology, I have labmates in four different academic programs, and have encountered students with overlapping research interests across the social science, physical sciences, and engineering disciplines. While innovative, interdisciplinary research is a great strength of Princeton University, many of the opportunities for graduate students to work with and learn from each other, such as graduate student seminars, are conducted and funded by individual departments or academic programs. If elected, I would encourage the creation of interdisciplinary seminars and workshops through the graduate school’s existing Interdisciplinary Scholarly Program, and would also advocate for the expansion of funding towards support for such programming.

I am especially interested in encouraging and facilitating in efforts for GSG assembly representatives to work together in order to support collaborative opportunities. As I start, I would continue support for the GSG’s program on interdepartmental social mixers to bring together the different academic programs of the graduate school. I would also prioritize putting together shared resources that can provide students with broader access to information about finding summer research or industrial internships, applying for fellowships, or the process for obtaining teaching assistant positions outside one’s home department.

In addition to my focus on interdisciplinary collaboration, I also hope to advocate for potential improvements in the academic lives of all graduate students. In particular, a large proportion of students are enrolled in DCE status, and, for example, it is more common than not for students in my program to spend at least a year as a DCE. I would like to explore ways in which DCE students can receive improved support for being a part of the campus community and for completing dissertation research. To that end, I will also look to expand opportunities like Graduate Writing Days and potentially the availability of graduate working spaces to provide a greater variety of times and places for graduate students to work on research in a social and interdisciplinary environment.