

Lauren Feldman: GSG Exec – Academic Affairs Officer



My name is Lauren Feldman, and I'm a third year Ph.D student in the Psychology department. I'm running for the position of Academic Affairs Officer, and I'm excited by the opportunities this role would provide me to further assess and advocate for grad students' academic needs.

Some of my favorite experiences as a grad student have arisen from my time volunteering for departmental service. I'm currently in my third year serving as a graduate representative to the Psychology department's DGS, a role in which I annually survey graduate students on their experiences, concerns, and issues in the department, and communicate their messages to the appropriate figures, both within and outside the Psychology department. Perhaps most notably, along with two other grad students in my department, I spearheaded a petition to the Graduate School in order to address the unreasonably high and inequitable teaching loads of Psychology graduate students (an issue that dramatically interfered with students' ability to conduct their research). As part of this petition, I surveyed graduate students and reached out to administrators in other departments at Princeton, as well as to Psychology departments at our peer institutions and fellow Ivy League universities, to compile comparative data on average teaching requirements across departments. We found that our department had teaching loads up to 12 times those of many other comparable departments, and after reviewing these findings in our petition, the Graduate School and Provost offices significantly reduced our department's teaching loads by a whopping 50% in years 3, 4, and 5 (!!). This was one of my proudest moments as a departmental representative, and it affirmed my dedication to service and representation in grad student life.

In short, I have a passion for — as well as ample experience — representing the interests of my fellow graduate students. I have a deep appreciation for the opportunity to hear the needs and concerns of my peers (as well as to compile and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data on these issues), and I'm eager to do the important and necessary work of making sure those messages, findings, and recommendations are passed on to the individuals and external bodies with the power to help. I believe that we're all more effective (and much happier!) when we have the academic resources and institutional support to thrive in our work, and I'd be excited and humbled to continue contributing toward that shared and essential goal.