Jessica Terekhov, Executive Committee

My standing as a fifth-year graduate student with substantial experience in student engagement makes me a strong candidate for a position on the Executive Committee of the CPUC. In my years at Princeton, I have served in numerous leadership capacities that have exposed me to student interests and opinions in a range of contexts. This has extended from my consecutive years on organizing committees for departmental colloquia and conferences, to my administrative management of a working group reflecting student and faculty interests in PUL’s Special Collections, and finally, to my extracurricular engagement with undergraduates as co-leader of the Student Friends of the PUL and now two-time ReMatch mentor. Besides training my leadership, communication, and time management skills, these experiences have given me a cross-sectional appreciation of student and faculty bodies, bringing graduate student interests and concerns into sharper focus. As an advanced PhD candidate myself, I understand the importance of professional development to my peers, particularly along tracks alternative to academia. At the same time, the dedication to academic inquiry I share with my peers makes me keen to support graduate research endeavors and initiatives. I am alert to interdisciplinary ideas and questions of institutional history and structure, the latter of which relate to my interest in joining the CPUC.

I hope that serving on the Executive Committee will shed new light for me on the operations of a higher-education institution and a research university in particular. This would be my most intimate exposure so far to the logistic means of fostering the premier scholastic work undertaken at Princeton. I consider such a perspective necessary for an informed, sustainable contribution to the academic sector, such as I hope to make, regardless of my professional role, in future. Additionally, I would look forward to this opportunity of contributing to and interacting with a robust representation of Princeton community voices. My role as an ambassador of graduate student interests would coextend with my obligation to listen to others’ perspectives, which I feel confident would enrich my experience as a graduate student in turn. Joining the Executive Committee of the CPUC represents an important step toward making the utmost of my time at Princeton.
Carli Kovel, Executive Committee

I am currently a second year graduate student studying chemistry. During this academic year, I have had the opportunity to serve as a representative on the CPUC Executive Committee. I am hoping to continue to serve as a liaison for graduate students to the larger Princeton University community during the 2021-2022 academic year by continuing to represent GSG on the Executive Committee. This year, I have worked with the other members of the Executive Committee to address a wide range of topics including the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on graduate students both on and off campus. In the future, I hope to have the opportunity to continue to address concerns of graduate students, as well as the Princeton community as a whole. Specifically, I plan to promote sustainability initiatives on campus. I will work to promote a diverse, sustainable, and empowering Princeton community. Additionally, the areas of study in the graduate school are diverse, each with unique challenges, and I hope that I can represent these different perspectives as a member of the Executive Committee. From policy changes to sustainability initiatives, I hope to have the opportunity to continue to be a voice for my peers in the graduate school as a representative on the CPUC Executive Committee.
Dennis Schaefer, Governance Committee
My name is Dennis, and I am running for the position as Graduate Student Representative on the Governance Committee, a position which I also hold in the current academic year and for which I am very exciting to be running again. Before outlining my motivation to serve in this particular function, I would like to explain what the Governance does exactly. The Governance Committee meets regularly with the Trustee Committee on Honorory Degrees for the nomination and selection of honorary degree recipients, i.e. important public figures, acclaimed outside scholars and administrators or other outstanding personas, who are to be honored at our yearly commencement ceremonies. It is my task in the committee to represent the graduate student body at the Committees meeting, to raise concerns that graduate students might have about a certain nominee or to highlight if somebody might resonate with our demographic in particular.

Since I was able to intimately familiarize myself with the committee climate and its procedures in the past year, this allows me to play an even more proactive role in the upcoming: Graduate students contribute vitally – and indispensably I might add – to the overall scholarly mission of Princeton University, which is why our voice in such a committee is of the utmost importance. It is therefore my particular objective that the honorary degree recipients continue to represent the diverse make-up of the graduate student body at Princeton. The nominations I intend to make in the upcoming year, as well as the positions I will take on those nominated by other people, will bear testimony to what concerns many of us graduate students at Princeton: that the privilege of an honorary degree will be bestowed on a racially, socio-economically and politically progressive array of remarkable individuals.
Dev Dabke, Judicial Committee
I’m a 3rd year graduate student in the Program for Applied and Computational Mathematics. I’m interested in joining the Judicial Committee in order to promote a more equitable and fair campus climate. As an undergrad, I led the Judiciary of the student government and, in this capacity, performed a variety of functions, e.g. managing student campus disputes, handling elections, and launch initiatives to promote student rights.
Hi! My name is Daniel (Danny) Persia, and I’m a graduate student in the Department of Spanish & Portuguese, also pursuing a certificate in African American Studies. My research centers on the translation of Afro-Brazilian literature and scholarly thought. I bring an interdisciplinary background, having studied Mathematics at the undergraduate level and Education at the master’s level. Prior to coming to Princeton, I taught for four years at the Boston Arts Academy—Boston’s only public high school for the visual and performing arts—and two years at the Federal University of Paraná in Brazil. I am eager to serve on the Priorities Committee. I believe that how an institution prioritizes its spending is directly related to the strength of its stated commitments. Student financial aid, graduate stipends, endowment spending and salaries have an enormous influence on who can study, teach and work at Princeton, and how they are able to invest in their families and futures. I am particularly interested in thinking about financial implications across lines of difference— including race, gender and class—and advocating for needed systemic and holistic change.
Michael Zhang, Resources Committee

I am a fifth-year PhD candidate in the department of Art & Archaeology, where I specialize in African art history. My dissertation examines how the arts, via corporate patronage, functioned as a form of soft power in South Africa from the 1970s to the 1990s, during a time of increased global economic, political, and cultural sanctions against the apartheid regime.

In addition to my academic work, I have been involved in administration and leadership at Princeton since I first arrived. I have been the departmental representative for A&A in the GSG since 2016. I currently sit on the University Student Life Committee and the Lake Campus Graduate Housing Development Committee, and I have also previously served on the Faculty-Student Committee on Sexual Misconduct. I have worked as a University Administrative Fellow in the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School in Spring 2020, and I am currently working as a Fellow in the Center for Career Development since Fall 2020.

I believe that I bring the requisite experience in navigating the realms of administration, policymaking, and networking to advocate for the graduate student body. It would be my privilege to serve as a member on the CPUC Resources Committee.