A meeting of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly was held at 6:45PM on November 7, 2012 in Houston Hall (Benjamin Franklin).

Members in attendance: Dina Shapiro, Neha Sheth, Nikhil Joshi, Allison Puttermann, Irene Bukh, Kevin Zeng, Kelly Breen, Justine Sefcik, Jessica Morris, Steven Lin, Bhaven Sayania, Katherine France, Frank DeSimone, Davy Huang, Nina Martinez, Simon Burger, Shyam Sundar, Qiwei Sun, Raghavendra Prasad, Jacob Berger, Frank Strellar, Rebecca Yan, Alison Stolow, Ayinde Tate, Luyao Wang, Yixi Sun, Payal Thakkar, Juan Aparicio, Amol Agarwal, Helen Reed, Edward Chen, Kristy Simmons, Nate Snyder, Ben Ediger, Jiayi Liang, Quyen Le, Mrinal Todi, Michael Nechemia, William Young, Kyle Guinivan, Andy Wu, Leila Greenawald, Rachel Delgado, Afreina Noor, Carlos Santana, Lara Fabian, Irene Plantholt, David Sorge, Sara Brandt-Vorel, Erica Maust, Darina Molkina, Pragya Verma

Executive Committee members in attendance: James Wiley, Vera Mucaj, Suson Mello, Anthony Pratcher, Kim Wexler, Kilang Yanger, Akeesha Washington, David Bendell, Prashant Subbarao, Brian Magnuson, Tanvir Mohammed, Effie Zhou

Chair James Wiley welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. He introduced GAPSA to the new GA members.

The minutes were approved.

VC Updates:

Chair
No Update

Vice Chair
The committee for President’s award has met, and recipients have been chosen. International Student mental health

VC for Communications
Facebook Likes and GAPSA website traffic has reached an all-time high. We are initiated the GAPSA Gear Design challenge, a contest for UPenn students to create the best GAPSA gear.

VC for Equity and Access
Some committee seats still need to be filled. We relaunched the applications for committee seats because there are newly created university committee positions available. We are planning a social event for affinity groups leaders.

VC for Finance
We finished student group funding. G12 Synergy fund applications are due next week. Please let everyone know. Synergy fund is to encourage G12 governments to cosponsor events with other schools and with affinity groups. Budgets are required to be eligible for the Synergy Fund.
Deadline is November 16.

VC for International Affairs
We are setting up an advisory board for securing housing for international students. We are working with organizations to conduct a trial run. We will be putting on joint social event with Drexel and Temple – Dwali. An international food cart festival will take place at end of November.

VC for Operations
No updates.

VC for Professional Students
We awarded funding to professional students. Please encourage more applicants.

VC for Research Students
Awarded $2000 to Kim Wexler for Ai Weiwei event in addition to other groups.

VC for Social Activities
Ai Weiwei event is a big deal and we are very excited about this opportunity. Many other events are coming soon, including the Beer Appreciation event this weekend.

VC for Student Life
Over three thousand people went to the Flu clinic, and we are very excited about the results. The Jorge Cham event was a huge success. We are working on Chillax coming in December, the Penn Fitness Challenge coming in the Spring, and a Pan-campus Student Health Survey at a TBD time.

VC for Student Programs
Sold out almost every game for the Sixers. Thanksgiving annual dinner is coming up.

IVY Summit:
Introduction to IVY Summit, which occurred this past weekend, given by James Wiley. The Pan-Ivy advocacy issue is an issue that we all take up together as an Ivy League. This year it was building mental health issues. Of the ten workshops at the Summit, five were specifically about promoting mental health at our schools. We at Penn have a unique position in the IVY league because of our funding and our support from the administration. We also have a number of students who sit on university committees who voice our concerns to the school administration and faculty, but there is always more work to be done.

GA Opportunity Fund:
Re-introduction to the GA Opportunity Fund by James Wiley. GA members should feel empowered to initiate change at Penn. The role of the rep is to actively engage in the issues confronting the school. We must look critically at our school and seek out ways to improve.

Kevin Zeng – GA Opportunity Fund Proposal:
Mental health is a serious issue and CAPS is overwhelmed by the amount requests. Idea for the GA opportunity fund is to transform the GSC into a spa for a day to help people decompress and work on mental health in a different way.

Discretionary Fund Votes:
Three group of students came before the General Assembly requesting money from the Discretionary
Fund.

**Group 1:**
**Yucatan in Pennsylvania 2013**
(Joanne Baron)

The Yucatan Peninsula has been home to a series of consequential historical events and contemporary developments. It was one of only a few regions on earth where individuals independently developed agriculture as a means of subsistence, established large sedentary centers, and formed socially complex, hierarchical societies. It was the scene of conquest and colonization, but also of resistance and revolution, including one of the most successful indigenous uprisings in the colonial Americas – the Caste War. Today, it is best known as a mecca for tourists and drug cartels; Cancun is a major port for both cruise ships and cocaine smugglers. These factors, along with an unprecedented rise in undocumented migration to the US, finds Yucatan ever more entangled in international economic and migratory flows. Not surprisingly, the Yucatan Peninsula has become a hotbed of intellectual inquiry among scholars from numerous disciplines.

The 2013 Yucatan in Pennsylvania Roundtable will bring together a group of twelve local scholars – including anthropologists, historians, art historians, linguists, and sociologists, from the University of Pennsylvania, Penn State, Carnegie Mellon, Juniata College and Temple – to present informal papers and lead discussions about pre-Columbian, colonial, and contemporary Yucatan. The goals of the Roundtable are to engage scholars of many different disciplines, cultivate an informal yet collaborative research environment, and create a network of local scholars who can continue to interact beyond the conference itself.

The Roundtable was first held at Penn State in 2007 and again in 2011. In 2013, scholars from the Anthropology and English Departments at the University of Pennsylvania – including Dr. Richard M. Leventhal and Dr. David Kazanjian – will take the reins from historians at Penn State and will hold the conference in Philadelphia at the Penn Museum. Doing so provides an opportunity to showcase the work of Penn faculty and graduate students and brings visibility to the Anthropology and English Departments, to the Penn Museum, and to the University. Moving the Roundtable to the University of Pennsylvania will also reinforce Penn’s position at the forefront of innovative interdisciplinary scholarship in Pennsylvania, and will continue Penn’s long tradition of research within the Maya region of Latin America.

**Questions:**

1. How much are tickets for Penn Grad Students?
   a. Free.
2. Are you doing anything to advertise this?
   a. We are looking put the event on many people’s listservs.
3. What are the specific budget items?
   a. Working lunch and travel for the participants.
4. Is this open to all graduate students?
   a. Yes.

**RESOLVED:** By a majority vote, the Yucatan in Pennsylvania 2013 event will receive funding in the amount of $600.

**Group 2:**
**Dwali Night**
(Neeti Desai)

I am writing to represent the Indian Students’ Dental Association (ISDA) at the School of Dental Medicine. We are a young and vibrant club that was started several years ago. Our main objective as a student organization is to spread awareness about South Asian culture within the Penn community. Since its inception, every year ISDA has been host to the Annual Diwali Night at Penn. This year, Diwali Night is scheduled to be on Friday, November 30th. This event includes a fully catered buffet-style Indian dinner, performances from various student groups, and a general celebration of the most anticipated festival in the Hindu culture. We first started out having a small celebration within the Atrium of the Robert Schattner Building at the SDM, but have grown so much in popularity since then. Last year, the Diwali Night was held at Houston Hall, with over 200 audience members in attendance from all facets of the student body at Penn. Every year, ISDA invites various South Asian Student Societies around the Penn community - from the Undergraduate as well as Graduate schools(including Penn Med, Penn Law, Wharton). We ask
the leaders of these student bodies to encourage their members to at least attend, if not participate in the Diwali Night. Over the past several years, we have had a variety of student run performing arts groups participate in the Diwali Night, including organizations such as Penn Dhamaka, Penn Naach, Penn Atma, and SDM’s very own dance team - Brown Sugar. ISDA strongly believes that it is of utmost importance that all members of our community be given the opportunity to learn about and explore various cultures and traditions that make up the socio-cultural melting pot at Penn. For this reason, we work tirelessly to promote South Asian awareness by hosting various events throughout the year in which all facets of the Penn student body can participate.

As it is an event that is held on quite a large scale, we also have matching financing needs. For the past few years, ISDA has spent approximately $7,000 each year to host this event. Our funds are mainly spent on two major aspects of the event - venue and dinner. This year, we plan to host the Diwali Night at Houston Hall again, and in the past, this has amounted to nearly $2,000-$2,500, which includes all costs from Hall rental, Audio/Video, tables and chairs, as well as facilities staff. In the past, ISDA has catered the Diwali dinner from various local Indian restaurants including Karma and Desi Village. From our previous experiences, we estimate that restaurants charge somewhere within the price range of $20/person for full catering services, which includes a round of appetizers, followed by a buffet-style dinner of various traditional Indian curries, rice and bread. As this is a traditional cultural event, we DO NOT serve any form of alcoholic beverages. For a rough estimate of nearly 250 audience members in attendance (including participants), dinner and catering are usually budgeted at approximately $5,000. In the years past, we have charged attendees anywhere from $17-$22 for tickets to the Diwali Night as a way for us to cover some of our costs. In addition, we hold numerous fundraising events, and also reach out to local businesses for sponsorship opportunities to finance our event. It is our hope that the GAPSA GA considers this letter as a request for Funding for ISDA’s Annual Diwali Night to help us keep ticket prices at a minimum. We request that GAPSA awards our organization $1,000 to assist us in making Diwali Night 2012 a definite success. This would allow more of the student body to share in our excitement to celebrate the illustrious festival of Diwali.

RESOLVED: By a majority vote, the Diwali Night event will receive funding in the amount of $1000.

Group 3:
Global China Connection
(Yingjing Wang)

With the goal of creating connections between top U.S. resources and progressive powers in China, this year GCC UPenn is teaming up with the GCC Chapters of Columbia and Cornell to organize a medical consulting trip to China. Our goal is to offer student volunteer consulting services to four non-profit healthcare organizations in China, providing students at UPenn and other participating universities with a real-world opportunity to understand China's healthcare system through first-hand experience. Regarding student eligibility for this trip, GCC UPenn will be welcoming applications from professional, graduate and undergraduate Penn students including but not limited to those who are interested in general business consulting, medical studies, or biotechnology. We plan to include approximately 30 students in this trip. Prior to the trip, we will be inviting consulting experts to hold training workshops at Penn and to serve as mentors to participating students from UPenn, Columbia, and Cornell, and all Penn students are eligible to attend the training workshops and build contact with the senior consultants and other Ivy League students. We hope to hold 3 training sessions in all, each of which will feature one speaker who will be given a $50 travel subsidy. This totals to a sum $150. Finally, to raise awareness around campus, we would also like to print and distribute approximately 500 posters (color, A4 size, $0.20 each), 800 flyers (black and white, ¼ of A4 size, $0.07/each), and 30 brochures (color, about 15 pages, double-sided, $5 each). This totals to $100 + $14 + 150 = $264 in marketing costs. In addition, if enough funds are available, we would also like to provide food and drinks at the information and training sessions, which would require an additional $15 for each of the 10 sessions being held (in total, $150). To summarize, students selected for participation in this year’s medical consulting trip and the greater Penn community would benefit in a number of ways, by having opportunities to receive consulting training from experienced medical consultants, gaining real-world experience by working with respected consultants and medical organizations in China, and being able to form connections and collaborate with other Ivy League students from Columbia and Cornell. GCC UPenn also treat the consulting trip and training sessions as great networking opportunities to invite the mentors over to our future speaker series, workshops, and conferences during this academic year. GAPSA’s financial support has been vital to the operation of GCC in the past, so we thank you in advance for your consideration.

Questions:
1. Will the mentors be hosting workshops?
   a. Yes, they will give 3-4 workshops and give speakers series. They are informed speakers.
2. Is this open to all Penn students?
   a. Yes.
3. Where will the posters be placed?
a. They have not posted yet. Van Pelt, Huntsman, most of the schools, and some of the student housing.
   b. Also in the medical school and biology departments.
4. Can you clarify the primary event?
   a. A medical consulting trip with an associated speakers series.

**RESOLVED:** By a majority vote, the Global China Connection event will receive funding in the amount of $1000, specifically for the speaker series.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM by the Chair and was followed by internal committee meetings.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Magnuson, GAPSA VC for Operations