University of Pennsylvania
Graduate & Professional Student Assembly

Meeting of October 20, 2011

MINUTES

A meeting of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly was held at 7:00PM on October 20th, 2011 in Irving Auditorium (Amado Recital Room).


Executive Committee members in attendance: Joe Friedman, Nina Zhao, Kim Wexler, James Wiley, Shaina Oake, Ben Ediger, Jason Cantu, & Seattle Wang.

Chair Joe Friedman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Roll Call was taken by Vice Chair of Operations, Jason Cantu, and Minutes were approved.

Presentations from the Chair and Vice Chair:

The Chair and Vice Chair gave brief presentations to the general assembly where they discussed GAPSA’s goals, structure, and improvements. Both chairs encouraged the GA to forward the VC of Communication’s weekly updates to their constituencies.

Presentations from the Vice Chair for Student Programs and Social Activities:

The Vice Chair for Student programs discussed how and when she holds events as well as how many students she typically targets. The Vice Chair for Social Activities demonstrated where to locate his events on the web and explained how to obtain tickets etc.

Guest Speaker:

Raina Vyas, Public Health Outreach Coordinator (vyasr@exchange.upenn.edu), with Student Health Services gave a presentation regarding the goals and objectives of SHS. Her presentation will be e-mailed to the general assembly.

VC Updates:

Chair
Ivy summit will be on November 4-6. Six of GAPSA’s EC members will be in attendance to represent Penn.

Vice Chair
On Monday reps from professional council and research council along with Ben & Shaina worked on the President’s council travel funding. This is for travel conferences. There were 25 grant applications total. There is a fall spring and summer round of
applications. A lot of people are traveling internationally and will be doing a wide range of work.

She is also working on the GradFest survey follow up. She also sits on the trustees committee where she will be doing a presentation on life as a student at Penn.

**VC for Communications**
The website: will be working on that at the moment. She is hoping to add paypal functionalities etc. She will be talking to the web developer about a getting more content on the web. The Facebook group will be redone with our calendar and updated constantly. She will also change the logo on the top of her weekly email.

**VC for Equity and Access**
She needs more people for committees. Please serve on the Student Health Committee and Insurance Committee (she needs 4 people). These are the two committees that need to be filled ASAP.

**VC for Finance**
GAPSA funds are being delegated more democratically than ever by the finance committee. Over the past two weeks $23K has been given out through the committee through votes.

**VC for Operations**
This weekend is the GAPSA GA retreat. Please show up to the bus at 9:15am. An e-mail was sent regarding what to take on the trip. Please submit forms from your student government officials stating you are official GAPSA representatives. The next meeting will be in the Ben Franklin room but on Tuesday November 1st. Please send an e-mail to gapsa.operations@gmail.com if you have not been receiving GAPSA e-mails.

**VC for Research Students**
He has been working with administration to solve issues affecting research students.

**VC for Social Activities**
November 11 is the Black white formal at the Ritz Carlton. Tickets are on sale now at the graduate student center.

**VC for Student Life**
There is a Flu Clinic Sign Up to volunteer on October 29th 11-3:30 at the ARCH Building. Penn Transit has agreed to look into putting a shuttle across the South Street Bridge to service the graduate hospital area. Anant Agarwalla has put together a survey, and we are trying to get the largest number to participate. Go see him if your student government has a listserv or know of any other ways to publicize it. Tell your friends!! The PennPark situation has been straightened out. It was a clerical error and not a policy error that graduate students had to pay. So, registered student groups (graduate or undergraduate) do NOT need to pay to use Penn Park. If you hear of anyone having problems - please let us know. Penn Graduate Student fees went up so that they could build the park, so therefore we should be able to use it. Penn Administration reneged on their idea to get rid of services in Sansom House. So everything is as it was. But again, if there are any problems/people are unhappy let us know.

**VC for Student Programs**
Volleyball tourney has 200 people.

General Assembly Member Formal Introductions (School of Dental Medicine & School of Veterinary Medicine):

Marisa & Gabe – The dental program is a 4yr program and located on 40th and locust. They offer services for a reduced fee to students at Penn (they could always use patients!). The program starts off with about 100 students and most students go on to a residency where they either specialize or do one more year. They meet with their student council and report back.

Will (2nd year), Melissa, Irene (5th year), and Nikhil (1st year). Students in the School of Veterinary Medicine all have the same classes together and after 2 years can specialize

Discretionary Fund Votes:

Two groups of students came before the General Assembly requesting money from the Discretionary Fund.

Group 1:

Homelessness in Philadelphia
(Katie MS2 & Luke MD, PhD)

The two students proposed an event where medical students as well as social work students can assist people living with AIDS and that are homeless.

The way to bring attention to this is to have a speaker event – Jim McDermott from WA – physician turned politician who has been working for 20 years on homelessness. The students have received external funding. They are asking for food and accommodations funding and are $700 short from making the event happen. The proposed date is Friday Nov. 18th.

Questions:
1) Are there any other opportunities that they are still waiting on?
   Yes.
2) What was the total cost for the event?
   $2,200. With all the funding already accepted, there is $684 needed to be covered.

Group 2:

Diwali
(Students from Rangoli, the Indian Association at Penn)

The two students are trying to infuse Indian culture into Penn’s campus. They have had various events already. Diwali is the largest festival in India – the festival of lights. For the event they are collaborating with other graduate associations from Drexel and groups here at Penn. Cost is $7,000 that will be ticketed. They are requesting $2,000 from the Discretionary Fund.

Questions
1) What other funding sources do you have?
   Yes. But the organization is already in the red and can’t match outside funds.
2) What is the date of the event?
   October 29th.

Discussion following the presentations:

*Homelessness in Philadelphia*
RESOLVED: By a majority vote, the Homelessness in Philadelphia event will receive full funding in the amount requested.

*Diwali*
RESOLVED: By a majority vote, the Diwali event will receive funding in the amount of $500.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30PM by the chair and was followed by internal committee meetings.

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Cantu, GAPSA VC for Operations