University of Pennsylvania  
Graduate & Professional Student Assembly  
Meeting of February 29, 2012  
MINUTES

A meeting of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly was held at 7:00PM on February 1st, 2012 in Houston Hall (Ben Franklin Room).


Executive Committee members in attendance: Joe Friedman, Nina Zhao, Kim Wexler, James Wiley, Giselle Xiaomeng Liu, Maria Murray, Rachel Delgado, Matt Colo, Ben Ediger, Jason Cantu, & Seattle Wang.

Before the General Assembly meeting there was a discussion with the Professional Council regarding attendance. There were suggestions to:

1. Remove members that have missed more than 3 meetings
2. Change how GAPSA communicates with G12 schools to get representatives
3. Remove EC members that consistently miss meetings and request that they remove GAPSA from their resumes

Chair Joe Friedman gave a warm welcome to everyone and called the meeting to order. He gave an update regarding where GAPSA stands for the rest of the semester regarding meetings for the rest of the year. The next meeting will be at PennDPS to answer questions about security and receive a tour of the facility. There will be no discretionary fund votes, etc. Please come with questions regarding security. The last regular GA meeting will be on March 28th followed by elections on April 11th.

- We need 2 people for the Advisory Council for Social Responsibility.

Attendance concerns were then brought before the General Assembly. After 2 excused absences, GA members are supposed to be dismissed. Guidelines have been drafted to elaborate on the attendance policy. Please discuss with Joe after the meeting. The draft essentially says that after 3 unexcused absences the GA members should be excused from GAPSA and it should be removed from their resume.

Minutes from February 15th were approved.

Roll call was taken by Vice Chair for Communications, Jason Cantu.

Voting Logistics was discussed by the VC for Equity and Access Rachel Delgado. She discussed who could vote and who could not at the final election.

GAPSA had a guest visit from Penn Administration, Director of Graduate Student Center, Anita Mastroieni, to discuss Child Back-Up Care.
RESOLVED: The Child Back-Up Care project will be funded in full within the provisional budget.

VC Updates:

Chair
Penn tuition is rising next year. Each of these budgets is set by the individual deans at each school. Because each school has a different tuition, this will vary. The most expensive school is Dental followed by Wharton, & Law.

Vice Chair
Nina discussed the South Street Bridge shuttle service. We are trying to pilot it through PennTransit. There was a core group that was interested after GAPSA took a school wide survey. PennTransit is proposing a 6 week pilot running M-F from 6-3AM. The shuttle service would be a student calling for a pick up at one of the transit locations and being driven to your house or vice versa. The issue is funding: will cost about $9,966. They are requesting funding from GAPSA. Jason sent out an e-mail regarding this earlier, please read and click on the Google doc link if you can help.

Questions:
1. The $10K is for 6 weeks.
2. They will take you to your doorstep only within a certain boundary.
3. The South Street shuttle goes to South Street and about 8 blocks further south (about 2sq. miles – thank you, Evelyn).
4. Have we considered charging students?
   - We can bring this up.
5. Why can’t they expand the East Shuttle boundaries?
   - We can present this to PennTransit.

VC for Communications
Statistics on the website:
- The communications position has changed a lot this year. The e-mail, the website, & promotional purchases.

Last year the previous website only reached 2K students. The new website has gotten well over 8K people out of Penn. Per day we get over a couple thousand clicks. 40% is for the calendar and a lot has gone to grants and funding clicks.

VC for Equity and Access
Look for information regarding elections soon. If you are interested in an EC position, talk to the current EC member.

VC for Finance
This was the most competitive week to date for discretionary funding.

VC for International Affairs
There will be international club night on the 22\textsuperscript{nd}. If you want international music played, send some music requests. Will be meeting with one of the vice provosts to discuss internships abroad.

VC for Operations
Please e-mail me if you can’t come to meetings.

VC for Social Activities
There were 2 happy hours in the past 2 weeks. There were about 450 people at the stoplight party. Tomorrow there will be a happy hour that is cash bar, but $5 tickets can be purchased by Penn students. There will be a St. Patty’s day happy hour after break.

VC for Student Life
The dual career couples event went very well. There will be a stress mgmt. event on March 14\textsuperscript{th}. 
VC for Student Programs
All the flower show tickets have been sold out, but we are going to try to get more? After spring break, there will be a cocoa and cookie night at the grad center again. The 76ers and Knicks game sold out. People started waiting in line at 8am. We had 100 tickets and there were more people than anticipated who showed up.

Discretionary Fund Votes:
Three groups came before the General Assembly requesting money from the Discretionary Fund

Shabbat dinner
(The Grad Network)

The Jewish Graduate Student Network has partnered with the Lubavitch House at UPenn for over 10 years to host an annual University of Pennsylvania graduate student-wide Shabbat dinner in Houston Hall. The event has, in recent years, attracted between 250 and 300 Penn graduate students from among all twelve graduate schools at Penn. The dinner features traditional Shabbat food and prayers, as well as on-site sushi makers and an open bar. By all accounts, this is the biggest event thrown by the Jewish Graduate Student Network, the highlight of every year.

In the past, GAPSA has been very generous in their assistance in making this event happen, offering as much as $1500 in 2010. The mission of the Jewish Graduate Student Network at Penn dovetails neatly with GAPSA’s goals of forging cohesion among the various graduate student bodies, which often remain fragmented even on the same campus. Our plan of action this year is similar to the one that has led to predictably successful events in the past: PR occurs at the level of the “planning committee,” which represents Jewish student leaders from the various graduate schools on campus. Thousands of flyers are printed, the event goes on the Jewish Graduate Student Network’s calendar, a Facebook event is created, and of course, word is mouth is utilized. The first meeting of the planning committee has already met with our two main organizers, Miriam Steinberg-Egeth (director of the Jewish Graduate Student Network) and Rabbi Levi Haskelevich (director of the Lubavitch house at Penn), and most details have already been worked out.

Over the course of each academic year, the Grad Network reaches over 1000 graduate students in Philadelphia, about 500 of whom are from Penn and 300 of whom are through this event alone. The dinner builds on the success of the Grad Networks annual welcome reception for new Jewish student that is held at the Grad Student Center as part of the New Student Orientation every year. After each Shabbat dinner, we often hear from students that “this is the only event I go to all year,” making this our most successful event in bridging the gap between the students of the G12.

The dinner is scheduled for March 23, 2012 between 7-10pm in Bodek Lounge in Houston Hall. Logistics are underway and tasks have been divided among the members of the planning committee. The total cost of the event is an estimated $4500, divided as follows:

- Catering $1500
- Sushi $800
- Room rental $750
- Alcohol $400
- Challah and dessert $300
- Non-alcoholic beverages $300
- Paper goods $250
- Publicity $120
Door checker $30
Transportation $50

We are expecting $2000 from participant fees ($10/students, $20/non-students), $350 from the Jewish Graduate Student Network, $150 from the Lubavitch House, and $500 from the Commission for Campus Projects. We are, therefore, requesting the balance of $1500 from the GAPSA discretionary fund. Please contact Deborah Shroder (deborah.shroder@gmail.com) regarding presentation at the weekly discretionary fund meeting.

This group is requesting: $1,500.00

Questions:
1. What was the total cost of the event?
   14K.
2. How many other sources?
   Many groups contribute to funding.
3. Who is allowed to purchase tickets?
   Anyone.
4. How will you promote GAPSA?
   There is a banner that displays all contributors to the event/
5. Do non-Jewish students attend?
   Yes. This event is not limited to just Jewish students.
6. This is both a cultural and religious dinner.
7. How many people do you expect to attend?
   200-300 people.

Intercultural Leadership Symposium
(Menty Bayleyen)

Our group is composed of four graduate students and one undergraduate student. We have been meeting as a group on a bi-weekly basis during the year in order to plan a symposium about immigration. Our vision is to increase awareness among the general student body, as well as among faculty and staff, regarding immigration issues in areas such as health care, access to higher education and post 9/11 implications for immigrant students. We met to discuss immigration matters with professionals and Penn professors with expertise in this area, and we were successful in recruiting wonderful speakers for our event. We found an undocumented student who is willing to tell her story. She will help us put a face on these issues. We are also compiling a list of contact information for students who are interested in advocating these causes on the local and national level.

Goal: The goal of the symposium is to create awareness among the Penn community of different aspects of immigration issues. The lectures in the symposium will be interdisciplinary and will cover the following areas: health, education, business and law.

Room reservation: We would like to execute our plan on Friday, April 6th. We are in the process of reserving a room at Houston Hall- Ben Franklin Room.

Estimated Budget: $600-$800 to cover advertisement, A/V equipment, refreshments, speakers, parking, etc.
We feel that this symposium will serve an important purpose for both the immigrants’ community and the Penn community. We welcome the opportunity to present our ideas to the GAPSA, and would be most grateful if the GAPSA agrees to assist us in funding our event.

The group is requesting: $800.

**Questions:**
1. What are the issues the lawyer would address?
   He will address access to higher education for immigrant students. He will also talk about access to healthcare.
2. If we granted $600 instead of $800 … what won’t get funded?
   The budget is in the $700’s so the $800 is to be on the safe side.

**Vice Chair for Social Activities**
(Giselle Xiaomeng Liu)

Greetings from Giselle Xiaomeng Liu, the vice chair for social activities from GAPSA. I am writing to apply for the Discretionary Fund. I provide the following reasons for your consideration.

The cost of every event increased from last fall semester till now primarily due to an increase in the number of the students attending.

From the excel spreadsheet you can see that the balance before I took over the position is $26,648.56 which excludes a scheduled payment for the annual Boat Cruise event. For Feb to May term, proportionally, the balance is supposed to be $40,000.

The full amount for the Boat Cruise will be paid in the end of February or the beginning of March (Purchasing department is reviewing the contract now) After the transaction, the balance of the social account will be ($1,298.44).

I have received $6,000 funding from chair and vice chairs to support the past two Happy Hours (ALFA & Dental School Stoplight party) and to make up the 1298.44 overspending. So far, after calculating the costs for the two events and the $6,000 funding, there is only $683.81 left in the social account. Since there are still two months left and I will not receive any income from the Boat Cruise until I start to sell tickets, I have to seek funding from the Discretionary Fund in order to let the future events happen. The following is the events I have planned for the rest of the academic year.

I have tried really hard to negotiate with the vendors to get the best deal for GAPSA and maintained the cost per event within $2,200 with an exception for the Wine-Walk. You can see from the excel spreadsheet to have a better sense where the money will go. I sincerely request for $6,000 for the future events. Thank you so much.

She is requesting: $6,000.00

**Questions:**
1. Is this a loan?
   No. This is actually to go into the budget.

**Discussion following the presentation:**

**RESOLVED:** The Shabbat dinner will receive funding in the amount of $1,500.
RESOLVED: The Intercultural Leadership Symposium event will receive funding in the amount of $800.

RESOLVED: The Vice Chair for Social Activities will receive full funding in the amount of $6,000.00.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35PM by the chair and was followed by internal committee meetings.

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Cantu, GAPSA VC for Operations