GAPSA GA Meeting
Houston Hall – Ben Franklin Room
10/10/07

Execs present: all except Wenny Lin and Dan Grabell
Student reps present: Lokman Tsui, Roger Turner, Tim Shokair, Lucas Champollion, Vicky Doan-
Nguyen, Amy Fuller, Prem Patel, Lauren Mattern, Mat Abramsky, Alisa Tu, Gina Calzaferri,
Christopher Thomas, Tyler Zimmerman, Jamie Ford, Jacqui Simonet, Tammer Farid, Janine Everett,
Robin Levine, Alejandro Hagan, Katie Farrell, Page Crew, David Chao, Ben Shiller

Andrew: 3rd item – Student Life Committee. They already talked about it themselves so we’re not
going to talk about it. Dan Grabell, the Chair, has an interview tonight and so could not be here
so he asked me to take over for him.

First thing. Successes. Christa had a big hand in that. We filled 110 positions. I think most of the
policy councils met already.

Applaud to Alina and her committee for all their good work publicizing events.

We’ve gotten some funds from the Provost, $15000 for a leadership retreat.

We also got funding for interdisciplinary awards fellowships. We had a reception at the Grad
Student Center where the recipients got to present their projects. The Provost came and
decided to make it a permanent thing.

Kara: Octobus. So we have almost 2 weeks under our belt with the Octobus. Yesterday, we had
76 people ride. I think that’s very good numbers. Not as many people as expected on the
weekends, but it’s still new. We’ve had a lot of publicity as well.

Alina: I want to thank everyone for their emails with their suggestions! We worked with Penn
Transit to make a schedule, so now we have one. Many thanks to Robin who is friends with the
designers to make the logo. I’m gonna email you flyers, a quarter sheet, if you’re school has an
event and people are staying on campus late, then you can say, look, take the Octobus.
Tomorrow we’re having a happy hour at Devil’s Alley to promote ridership of the Octobus.

Jessica: The happy hour is from 8:30-11 tomorrow. Please encourage everyone to attend and to
ride the Octobus there. You’ll get 2 free drink tickets when you get off. There’s free food. So I
think it’s a pretty good deal.

Ben: is it possible to get it online on Penn Transit?

Kara: I don’t think so b/c we’re already getting resistance about it. They don’t want it to seem
like it’s permanent.

So we just want to open it up to general discussion. What have you heard?

Jessica: Oh, and you can win an IPOD.

Neal: so we’ve been discussing a lot of topics among the execs. We really take everything we’re
working on seriously, and we do listen.

Brian: I second getting the schedule online somewhere.
Mat: you might benefit from putting up a Penn Transit-esque logo on the shuttle and website.

Alina: there are laminated flyers with the route and info put up around the penn transit stations.

Kara: from midnight to 3am it’s to door service. Before midnight you have to be waiting on one of the corners on the route.

You should be on the west side of Broad Street.

Lucas: could we talk more about why Penn Transit doesn’t support this? Could we get them to react?

Kara: so it may not be penn transit. I think they’re getting pressure from Business Services about not committing to it. They fear the backlash of students. It’s a funding issue, they say they don’t have enough money to make it permanent. We’re frankly running against a lot of red tape.

Andrew: the exec board has met with the Provost, so the provost knows about this, and he’s very interested to see how it turns out.

Neal: raise your hands if you’ve been on the Octobus. A big part of us representing this and telling people that the Octobus is great, is to have done it. Please try to find a reason to ride it.

Ben: is it restricted to grads?

Kara: no, it’s open to everyone now.

Andrew: Town Hall Meetings. Does everyone know what Town Hall Meetings are? It’s an opportunity for you to organize a meeting where your constituents can come and bring you feedback. We have a modest budget for this, ~$200 per school. This is something the exec board encourages you to do.

Christa: a lot of people do this in conjunction with their school government’s meetings. So this is your opportunity to tell them what GAPSA does.

Andrew: you can tell them about the events and programs we are throwing. See Victor for funding.

**Penn Campaign.** It’s a big fundraising capital campaign the university is kicking off. Saturday, Oct. 20th on College Green.

Jessica: they’re spending $1 million on this.

Andrew: yeah, so this is a big deal. They’ll be asking for money mostly from alumni. So please beware of this event. There will be a celebrity guest DJ. I’m not sure what that means. The Trustees will be there.

Christa: so it’ll be really nice to have lots of representation from grad students b/c grad students may not get as much focus as undergrads. They’ll see that grad students participate in University events and may potentially give back to the University.

Andrew: so we want to take this great opportunity to get the Trustees’ attention as well.
Christa: some of the money they want to raise they want to go toward grad student initiatives. So if they see us around then they’ll be more inclined to do that.

Andrew: a big chunk of this is also being considered for grad financial aid.

Kara: this is also for grad housing.

Christa: they may also consider child care services too. So it’s important that grad students go to this!

**Open Forum.**

Lucas: capitol hill initiative; endowment right now is one big source of income for the university; so there’s an initiative in Congress to require to spend at least 5% on grad students; so this may mean that there will be more money trickling down to us. So we may want to take a position on this.

Roger: I recently spoke with my graduate league about the stipend issue. So besides the federal government, one place where things could change is if Penn spent 5% of its endowment instead of 4%.

Christa: what would GAPSA’s role be in this?

Lucas: to pass a resolution recommending that this be passed.

Brian: we would have more strength if we connected with our corresponding bodies, like other Ivy League school governments. This may not be possible, but a statement by all of us + etcetera number of people, will have a much larger effect.

Ben: I think we want more info about this before we make a motion on approving this.

Lucas: motion to have exec contact other ivy league governments about this.

Kathleen: 2nd.

Unanimous consent.

Brian: I think it’s premature to even contact the Ivies yet about this until we as a general body have a position on this.

Lucas: it doesn’t mean to push the issue one way or another but just to see if other grad bodies would be interested in talking about this.

Kara: exec board is in a good position to reach out to other student govts. but it’d be nice to have one of you research more on what capitol hill is doing.

Andrew: so we have a motion to split the motion.

Lucas: so the NY Times had a report on this. The thing to do is to generate events. A resolution passed by the Ivy Leagues would be such an event. And this could set up things to put a motion forward.
Kara: can we table it to after the Ivy Summit?

Andrew: basically it’s an opportunity for the grad student governments to talk about issues. And this is something we can bring up to them.

Lucas: so I don’t want to presume the decision we take about this. But if we do decide to try to get a coalition about this, then we should stick with the original plan to find out more about it so we know how to approach the Ivy Summit.

Andrew: first decide if we will split the original motion.

Alina: I think before we can make any decision, we need to know what this law about. So maybe next GA meeting we can have one of you to talk to us about it. And the Ivy Summit is after that GA meeting, so we’ll be ready for it.

Lucas: I retract my motion.

Tammer: I motion that somebody who knows what’s going on will provide the info about what’s going on in Congress 24 hours before meeting, so we know what’s going on and we’ll be able to discuss it better.

Alejandro: 2nd.

All in favor: Unanimous consent.

Lucas and Brian volunteer to research the info and present it to the GA at the next GA meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 8:30pm