AGENDA FOR THE TENTH GA MEETING OF 2016-2017

Wednesday, March 15, 2017  Houston Hall
6:00-8:30 pm  Ben Franklin Room

I. Food is served  6:00 pm

II. Committee Meetings  6:00 – 6:30 pm
Ben Franklin Room

III. Council Meetings:
Professional Council: Ben Franklin room
Research Council: Bishop White room  6:30 – 7:30 pm

IV. General Assembly Meeting begins  7:30 pm

V. Updates & Announcements  7:30 – 7:40 pm
a. Minutes approved from last meeting
   i. Second
   ii. passes
b. Vote to reinstate David Johnson(Wharton GA Rep) as GA
   representative
   i. Second
   ii. passes
c. GAPSA Renewal Town hall (March 18)
   i. Everybody please attend, open to every graduate and
      professional student, faculty, staff, alumni
   ii. Located in the Kleinman Center Conference Room on the 4th
      floor of the Fisher Fine Arts Library
   iii. There will be a happy hour planned for 5 pm afterwards
d. Unionization
   i. There is now a public union called Graduate Employees
      Together – University of Pennsylvania (GET-Up)
   ii. GAPSA Research council passed several resolutions a few
      meetings back, and GAPSA Exec has been advocating these
      issues as well
   iii. An email sent out a couple of days ago from the university
      addressed some recent concerns of the research students


iv. GAPSA Exec have had meetings with university administration about issues that have brought up in research council
v. The Union is also working to advocate on these issues
vi. GAPSA Exec does not take a stance on whether students should unionize
vii. We see our role as facilitating open discussion and communication
viii. There will be an info session on March 27 in the Terrace Room of Claudia Cohen Hall from 6-8
     - We are getting faculty, union reps from other schools, union reps from Penn, and administration to present a full message on the Union
ix. Research Council is also working on establishing guaranteed years of funding for research students
e. Elections (March 29)
   i. There will also be an election for the new Chair of External Affairs
f. Columbia social and NYC trip (April 1)
   i. Facebook event is not set up yet
   ii. Going to NYC on April 1
   iii. Buses will leave at 9 am and come back at 10 pm
   iv. Cost is $10, but GA members get a discount
   v. This event is open to all graduate students, alumni
   vi. Limited spots so sign up quick
   vii. Primarily focused on graduate students, undergrads could go if they are over 21
   viii. Schedule
   - Leave in the morning
   - Breakfast with Columbia
   - Tour of City
   - Lunch
   - Open Bar and then cash bar
   -
   g. Others
   i. If there is any interest in any of the working groups, then message GAPSA President as soon as possible

VI. Constitutional Amendment on External Affairs 7:40 – 8:00 pm
a. This amendment relates to the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students and having external advocacy
b. This last weekend we had a couple of days in Washington DC where we learned about advocacy
c. We advocated for issues that had already been voted on by the GA
d. Issues included
i. Evidence based policy
ii. Immigration reform
iii. Health Care

e. Presentation by NAGPS President
   i. Thank you for being in the room you are in right now as a GA representative
   ii. Thank you for being active in NAGPS
   iii. What NAGPS does and the importance of advocacy
       - *Graduate* students do not have a lot of time and money
       - But they do have a lot of power, which NAGPS can help increase
       - There are many issues that are important to Graduate students
         a. Health care, research funding, immigration issues
       - The only way these issues are stopped is if all the graduate students in the US stand up and represent themselves, we are a very large voting block
       - And we are invested in the political system
       - NAGPS advocates by going to the hill, calling representatives, writing letters
       - UPenn is located in a very important spot to advocate
         a. Being close to other active universities, being a swing state
       - We have an opportunity for change involves talking with elected officials, running for office, etc…
   iv. This change is already happening, the Trump travel ban has just been overturned by a Hawaii judge, and grad students were a part of the advocacy
   v. Tonight you are considering a Chair of External Affairs, and this is a great way to get involved
   vi. NAGPS lobbies in Washington, helps schools lobby locally

f. Legislative Action Days
   i. In order to be fully effective at advocating in this regard, we need a position that does this full time
   ii. IN the LAD that happened this past weekend, Penn GAPSA President advocated on several bills that involved graduate students
       - Immigration bills
       - Research funding
       - Open access to federally funded research
       - Health insurance policies, especially with the recent uncertainty around the ACA
a. The new legislation might not be as favorable to graduate students as the ACA was
- All these efforts were done in collaboration with other universities
- In this visit, GAPSA Exec members met with the offices of Senator Toomey, Casey, and Congressman Evans and Grady
  a. Discussed issues already outlined
  b. Casey was more aligned with GAPSA viewpoints
  c. Toomey’s office was receptive to hearing the arguments and took notes
  d. Evan’s and Grady’s office was able to discuss more local issues
    i. Applying research to public policy and practice
    ii. How can we connect academic institutions to real world problems
    iii. Increasing communication between Penn and the community to help provide service
  e. Opened up lines of communication between these officials and graduate students for problem solving and expressing issues
  iii. Another issue that should be discussed by the end of the year, is the GA passing a series of issues that are important to graduate students so we have a formalized platform

  g. The amendment
     i. Refer to google docs for full amendment
     ii. GAPSA President reads the full amendment
     iii. Although this might be considered a part of the GAPSA renewal process, elections are coming up and so we need this position as soon as possible
     iv. Also, the President has been working extensively on these issues and would like somebody
     v. Motion to pass the amendment
        - Second
     vi. Motion to close debate
     vii. Motion to vote
        - Second
        - Passes

VII. Stipend Resolutions 8:00 – 8:10 pm
a. Resolutions aim to incentivize GAPSA General Assembly representatives and Executive Board members monetarily with the goal of improving GAPSA’s processes, structure, and functioning.
b. The problem
   i. Low participation and commitment
   ii. Lack of proper feedback loop
c. The solution
   i. Incentivize GAPSA members
   ii. Systemize
d. Outcomes
   i. More engaged GA reps and Exec
   ii. More graduate students know about the GAPSA and can benefit from functions
   iii. Greater collaboration between Penn administration, GAPSA, and graduate student body
   iv. Also increase effectiveness of the committees, which suffer from lack of engagement
   v. Increase level of constituency services, by more effectively representing schools and students
      - More events and sessions with students
      - Use these sessions to draft policy
   vi. This is a lot of work, which takes time, and we graduate students with multiple responsibilities
   vii. And this is a lot of work with no monetary result
   viii. And money will set higher expectations, higher accountability

VIII. Other resolutions from the renewal class will be coming up in April

IX. But since there will be elections next meeting, these resolutions need to be addressed now
a. And we need the best people in these positions, which can be achieved by compensation
b. Two resolutions
   i. $1000 per GA representative per year
   ii. $5000 per Exec member per year
c. A lot of the work that the Exec board does is being outsourced by the University for free
d. It is a lot of work for Exec
e. Future steps is to assure accountability and that members stay for the whole year
f. The goal is assure that the elections coming in two weeks will attract the best candidates
g. This lack of effectiveness of GAPSA is affecting other schools as well
h. We need to make GAPSA more representative of the Penn experience

X. Motion to pass resolutions
a. Second
b. Move to questions
   i. Is this an official resolution of the Renewal class?
      - The class resolution will come at the end of the semester
      - This resolution comes from a couple of GA reps
      - There has been significant discussion in the class about this
   ii. What financial impact would this have?
       a. $123,000 (8% of GAPSA Budget)
          i. Exec $55,000
   iii. What mechanism would we have for assuring accountability to make sure people stay for the whole year?
      - That will be a result of the white paper
   iv. How does the solution of paying people address the problems of GAPSA?
      - Just this will not completely solve the problem
      - There needs to be other
   v. What about the happy hour and free stuff?
      - That is payment for work done at the moment
      - This would mean that GA reps would have more established responsibilities and roles
      - And they would show GAPSA what they have done and it would be a clear job
   vi. The $120,000, will it come from additional money from the administration?
      - We passed a resolution last meeting to ask for more money
      - The aim is to grow the budget and then use it for this and other things
      - This resolution is not talking about how exactly the money will be acquired
      - The administration right now is likely to listen to GAPSA resolutions because of the Union
      - GAPSA is getting a 3.2% increase for next year, and combined with the gym proposal, will be a 7% increase
   vii. I am concerned with walking back to my school and saying that I am paying myself, and we have a ton of initiatives that we have to the university and if we take compensation then we create an alternative to the University where they could just hire somebody to work on these issues
   viii. It seems like the finances behind this motion is unclear and any increase in budget is what to be expected anyway
ix. You may believe that GAPSA members juggle a lot of responsibilities, but lots of other graduate students serve in positions. And this payment corrodes at the moral value of the jobs they are doing

x. And the whole body should determine whether it is ethically permissible to vote on paying yourself

xi. Assuming this gets past, are there any plans to adjust the stipend for interest or inflation?
   - This is only an initial point, and adjustments could come later
   - Also, next year’s GA is the only body that can decide on the budget and so this resolution is just making a statement

xii. How are the amounts determined?
   - This came from a discussion within the class and was a consensus amount

xiii. The 8% impact on the budget, is that on total budget or just GAPSA’s core
   - That’s the total, so if it was just GAPSA it would be closer to 16%

xiv. Who will monitor the work each GA member submits for payment? And what standards are they using? And if there is a non conformist, how will the money be reallocated?
   - Exec committee chairs will do this

c. Motion to move to debate
   i. Second
   ii. Happy hours and dinners are not specific GA benefits because they are open to everybody
   iii. There are moral and ethical issues, but the people who feel for the moral and ethical issues are few, and so we need people who are being paid
   iv. This is a political non starter
   v. I agree with a lot of the points made, and if I had been given the points earlier then I would have done more of my job, and using a monetary solution is too big, and clearly outlining the job details
   vi. I am concerned that joining GAPSA will decentivize joining other school governments
   vii. There are two very distinct proposals on the table. Paying Exec and GA. Exec might deserve a stipend. But the GA is a different story and they might not be ethically elected
   viii. There are better ways of incentivizing GA
ix. SASGov Exec gets paid $2000, and GAPSA Exec works much harder
x. It is unlikely that the administration will put less responsibilities on Exec, they are likely to get more responsibilities

xi. And I engage in this work because I agree with it on a deep moral level, but that should not preclude me from getting paid for it

xii. Everybody at the school provides labor at the school in some capacity. IDEAL, student councils, etc. I don’t see how anyone here can say that my labor is worth more than others. It is wrong, and would be a complete disservice to the other schools and organizations. And taking money will undermine all the faith they have in GAPSA

d. Motion to vote
   i. Second
   ii. Passes
   iii. GA Resolution
       - Does not pass
   iv. Exec Resolution
       - Does not pass

XI. Question about Gym membership?
   a. What are the details?
      i. The administration is not using the same financial structure as the undergrads
      ii. All full time graduate students will have access
      iii. There will be a 7% increase in student fees next year
      iv. Part of that will go to subsidizing the gym fees
      v. More than 50% of the graduate body will need to participate in this in order to make this financially feasible
      vi. The price we pay today is already subsidized
      vii. The subsidy will increase for next year
      viii. The net effect on general fees is about a $103 increase the first year which will increase over five years
      ix. And this will be subsidized by $1 million from the administration
      x. We are aware of the concerns from the professional council, and we are working towards getting more information

b. Did this use to be the case, and did GAPSA ask to get it removed? And did anybody in the administration ask GAPSA before hand about this?
   i. The previous situation was different, with different subsidizes
   ii. GAPSA Exec has been advocating for Gym membership in that it supports mental health, but we were not asked about this

XII. Motion to extend meeting
   a. second
XIII. Finance updates

- Round 4 funding just closed
- GFAC coming up
- Wharton Charity Fashion Show tickets
  - Ticket pickup is tomorrow at GSC
- Wharton fight night
  - Email for tickets
- All budgets on target
- We are running low in all the funds, because end of year
- No discretionary appeals
- Second round of traunches
  - Formally ask for suspension of rules
  - Motion
    - Second
- Total of next highest scoring group
  - Only one other group, and they are not recommended to come before the body
- Five groups
  - Combined total of $4,750.00
    - This is above the remaining funds in discretionary
    - But there is a 10% reserve in the budget that can accommodate this
- Motin to vote
  - Second
  - passes

XIV. Happy Hour: 8:30 – 11:00 pm

City Tap House