Council Minutes for January 19th, 2015 - 6:00pm

Meeting Opened: 6:02 pm

In attendance:

- Officers: Emily Thomas, Cat Majors, Alessandra Forcucci, Lynn Fahey, Nick Trenton
- Directors: Jesse Choe, Eric Lewis, Andrea Miranda, Mihika Tanzid, Sarah Kim
- Program Representatives: Jessica Bray (Anthropology), Evio Isaac (Architecture), Caitlin Huber (Art History), Ruda Cui (Biochemistry and Cell Biology), Sam Paulsen (Bioengineering), Blake Sutherland (Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering), Alicia Mangubat (Chemistry), Carl Bernier (Civil and Environmental Engineering), Temitayo Ajayi (Computational and Applied Mathematics), Jacob Gao (Computer Science), Lexi Malouta (Earth Sciences), Shannon Carter (Ecology and Evolutionary Biology), Scott Pett (English), Christina Regelski (History), Diane Glick (Master of Liberal Studies), John Alred (Material Science and Nanoengineering), Eleazar Marquez (Mechanical Engineering), David Erdel (Philosophy), Jacob M. Wahlen-Strothman (Physics and Astronomy), Santiago Sosa (Political Science), Harsh Upadhyay (Professional Masters in Engineering), Stephanie Zajac (Psychology), Bradley Johnson (Sociology), Jonathan Stewart (Statistics), Kareem Mehrabiani (Systems, Synthetic, and Physical Biology).

- Guests:
  - Welcome New Reps
    - Caitlin Huber - Art History
    - Scott Pett - English
  - STRIVE GSA Liaison Program
    - Connect graduate students to all Title IX resources and support
    - These liaisons will be offer to advice to students on an informal basis without registering a formal complaint
      - Graduate students are not considered a responsible employee, so they don’t have to report what they hear
      - Only as a TA are you required to report what you hear
    - Will help provide information about graduate students issues with Title IX to GSA
      - Also allow Title IX to see if there are problem departments
    - Once chose, liaisons will be identified to the graduate student body in the
      - GSA weekly announcements
      - GSA website
      - Coffee Breaks
      - Orientation
    - Votes (22 voting reps)
      - In favor: 22
      - Opposed/Abstained: 0
    - Email als20@rice.edu with any questions
  - Open Forum
- New Route for RVA/Greenbriar
  - Has been brought up at the parking meeting
- BRC third floor open space
  - Not built to be load-bearing
  - Have plans to build a tower on top of it later
  - They do not want to invest the money to make it a space
- Wellbeing Office wants to work more with the GSA

Constitution Updates
- Will be reworking the executive officer team to better focus needed roles
  - President
    - Determine agenda for Council, Executive Committee, and Cabinet meetings
    - Implement and oversee the execution of all programs, ordinances, and directives established by the Graduate Student Council
    - Preside at all regular and called meetings of the Graduate Student Council, the Executive Committee, and Cabinet
    - Serve ex officio on all committees of the Council and the Cabinet
    - Represent the GSA on and off campus
    - Call meetings of the Council at the request of at least three representatives or at his/her own discretion
    - Oversee the policies and procedures of the GSA loan fund program
    - Serve as one of the graduate student representatives on the university’s Graduate Council
    - Submit annual to the Council (with the Vice President of Finance) a budget proposal for the association
    - Disburse funds from the accounts of the GSA as approved by the Council (co-signed by the Vice President of Finance)
    - Appoint directors with approval of the Council
  - Vice President of Student Advocacy
    - Oversee policies and procedures in the association’s efforts to improve student life
    - Coordinate and foster relations with the various organizations and offices of the university community
    - Appoint standing and ad hoc committees and chairs for the association
    - Preside in the absence of the President
    - Oversee all student clubs funded by an independent student tax with Vice President of Finance
    - Oversees the Community Service Director, and Graduate Student Sace director
    - Takes on special projects
  - Vice President of Community Engagement
- Oversee planning and implementation of Council sponsored programs, services, and social events
- Plan, implement, and direct public relations policies and events for the GSA and its Council
- Oversee and assist the Social Director(s) and the International Student Outreach Director
- Serve as a nonvoting representative to the V and W Board or shall make nominations for a representative to that board
- Direct the association’s congress with Valhalla
- Coordinate and foster programs of communication and cooperation with the Office of International Students and Scholars, the Rice Women’s Resource Center, various University cultural organizations, other universities, and governmental entities locally, regionally, and nationally
- Report external events and information to the Council
- Organize and lead monthly roundtable meetings with student leaders of on campus cultural organizations
- Appoint coordinators for Orientation Week and Beer Bike
- Oversee the planning and implementation of Orientation
- Will have monthly roundtable meetings with cultural groups

**Vice President of Administration**
- Keep an accurate and current role of Council representatives
- Keep and publish complete minutes of all meetings of the Council, the Executive Committee, and the Cabinet
- Deposit all minutes and other records in the association’s archives at the end of the rm
- Preserve and maintain the association’s archives
- Attend to the correspondence of the association and its council
- Receive, approve, and submit to the Council’s consideration the petitions of dependent organizations
- Keep a record of all active dependent organizations and their officers
- Oversee and assist Media Director and Website Director

**Vice President of Finance**
- Keep all funds of the association in an account approved by the Council and in accordance with university policy
- Disburse funds of the association, upon the authorization of the Council
- Make a current and accurate general report of the association’s funds to the Council in its regular meetings
- Submit a complete and detailed report to the Council within the month before annual elections or whenever such a report may be requested by Council
● Provide a written account of the annual report to the Vice President of Administration
● Submit annually, with the Cabinet, a proposed association budget to the Council for its consideration and approval
● Maintain an up-to-date budget on the GSA Shared Drive accessible to the Cabinet
● Oversee all student clubs funded by an independent student tax, with the VP of Student Advocacy
● Oversee and assist the Grants Director

■ Vice President of Student Development
● Assist departmental and school Graduate Student Associations
● Hold monthly meetings with departmental/school GSA leaders
● Serve as a liaison between departmental and school Graduate Student Associations and the Council
● Coordinate and foster programs of communication and cooperation with alumni
● Serve as the Executive Board liaison to the Council Representatives
● Oversee and assist professional development director

■ Parliamentarian
● Oversee revisions and additions to the constitution and bylaws of the association
● Maintain an up-to-date edition of the constitution and bylaws of the association
● Advise the President and Council on procedural matters
● Oversee the association’s elections and referenda
● Submit end-of-term resolutions on behalf of the Council
● Preside over the Awards Committee selection process and is responsible for coordinating any and all GSA award ceremonies

○ Director Level Positions
  ■ Graduate Student Space Director
    ● Oversee the use, organization, and programming of the GSA Captain Lounge
    ● Upkeep the Captain Lounge in addition to the office space(s) of the GSA
    ● Assist the Vice President of Student Advocacy in matters of enhancing graduate student space and services on campus

  ■ Social Director
    ● Assist the Vice President of Community Engagement in planning and implementation of GSA sponsored programs, services, and social events
    ● Oversee Beer Bike

  ■ Community Service Director
- Organize, oversee, and execute on and off campus community service events to provide graduate students a means for giving back to campuswide, local, and/or international sources

- **Professional Development Director**
  - Coordinate with the Center for Career Development and other relevant professional offices on campus
  - Make existing professional programming more accessible and help develop new programming
  - Establish and maintain relations with graduate student alumni through outreach
  - Assist the Student Association with mentoring opportunities and programming for graduate students

- **Media Director**
  - Oversee the advertising and marketing efforts of GSA events
  - Document all events on the GSA website and social media accounts

- **Website Director**
  - Maintain and update the GSA website and GSA calendar as needed

- **Grants Director**
  - Assist the Vice President of Finance as needed with upkeep of the yearly budget
  - Oversee the Grants Committee, Grants meetings, and Grants allocation

- **International Student Outreach Director**
  - Serve as the primary liaison to the Office of International Students and Scholars
  - Meet monthly with the Vice President of Community Outreach and leaders of international student organizations
  - Be the principal cabinet member in charge of planning Graduate International Cultural Night and Graduate International Student Orientation

○ **Travel Grants**
  - Maximum $500 for travel to a scholarly conference
  - We do not have enough money to pay for every student
  - We will reserve the money we have left and give it as a prize for the 90 Sec Thesis competition
  - Will not force the grants committee to adjudicate the merit of different research

○ **Discussion**
  - We may not be getting money to people that really need it
  - People that win the 90 Sec Thesis might not need it
    ○ Also, 90 Sec Thesis may not be the best judge of merit
• It’s hard to adjudicate
  ○ Different departments have different needs
  ○ What constitutes need?
• Do we want to for an advisor letter of support?
  ○ Letter of support from department?
• Current model is not sustainable
  ○ We do not know how much money we will have going forward
• In the future, we can potentially put it on the departments to distribute the travel funding.
  ○ Some departments don’t have competitions already set into place
  ○ We could ask departmental GSA to adjudicate
• Originally was about trying to find what departments that need the most funding, but it turns out that it’s mostly the departments that are most plugged in
• Should we give preference to people involved in GSA?
  ○ We could put a travel grant for each event GSA hosts, so you have to volunteer
• Those interested can help us brainstorm ideas
• Contact gsa@rice.edu
  ○ Voting for constitutional changes (22 voting members)
    ■ In favor: 22
    ■ Opposed/Abstained: 0
• Upcoming Events
  ○ Grad Student Space Forum
    ■ January 20th, 5:30pm to 7:00pm
    ■ FE&P Training room, behind the ODEK
    ■ People will meet in the GSA/SA Captain’s Lounge at 5:15pm to walk over there
    ■ Free pizza
  ○ GSA Coffee Breaks
    ■ January 26th with RCSSA
      ● Celebrating Chinese New Years
      ● Pretty decorations
      ● Calligraphy demonstrations and teaching
      ● Chinese yummy snacks
    ■ February 9th with Risk Management
  ○ International Cultural Night
    ■ February 19th
    ■ Food from seven different cultures
    ■ Cultural performances and goods
    ■ There will be different cultural booths
- Different cultural activities planned
- With the undergraduate
- Contact mt37@rice.edu if you would like to participate or for more information
  - PhD Movie 1 and 2
    - February 24th
    - Will be screening both at the Rice Cinema
  - Beer Bike
    - Still looking for themes
    - Please submit ideas!
    - Still looking for subcommittee members
    - If they are interested in being part of the GSA, it’s a good segue

Meeting closed: 6:56pm