GSA Council Meeting Minutes — April 2013
Tuesday, April 16, 2013, 6:00 pm
Graduate Lounge, RMC

Attendees (according to sign-in sheet): Barbara Redeker (MLS), Kiri Kilpatrick (CHBE), Goat Domeracki (Religious Studies), Carolyn Van Wingerden (HART), Navid Sakhavand (CEVE), Jacob Wahlen-Strothman (Physics), Dan Puperi (BioE), Milind Chabbi (CS), Lu Wang (Stats), Christopher Dohna (Philosophy), Pei Dong (MEMS), Suraya Khan (History), David Ramirez (Housing/ECE), Zuolin Lin (ZSC1), Michael Farner (ESCL), Michelle Sneck (EBB), Aru Ray (Math), Mauro A. Rinaldi (BCB), Lynn M. Fahey (Sociology), Cherri Thompson (MLS), Michelle Downey (EEB), Michael Sinai (Architecture), JD Dornell (BCB), Melissa Venator (HART).

1. Officer Introductions
   1.1. President Goat Domeracki is a fourth-year student in the Department of Religious Studies.
   1.2. Internal Vice President Michael Sinai is a second-year student in the School of Architecture.
   1.3. External Vice President JD Dornell is a third-year student in the Department of Biochemistry and Cell Biology working in Dr. Michael Gustin's lab.
   1.4. Treasurer Navid Sakhavand is a second-year student in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering Department working in Dr. Shahsavari’s Materials Modeling Lab.
   1.5. Secretary Melissa Venator is a four-year student in the Department of Art History.
   1.6. Community Service Chair Cheryl Thompson is a first-year student in the Master of Liberal Studies program.
   1.7. Historian Anne Hellebust is a fifth-year student in the Department of Bioengineering.
   1.8. Publicity and Marketing Chair Michelle Downey is a second-year student in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology working in T.E.X. Miller Lab.
   1.9. Lounge Manager Chris Dohna is a fourth-year student in the Department of Philosophy.
   1.10. International Student Liaison Barbara Redeker is a third-year student in the Master of Liberal Studies Program.

2. Announcements and Updates
   2.1. Presentation of Kiri’s Hammer to Kiri Kilpatrick. As part of our ongoing effort to strengthen the GSA’s identity, we institute the tradition of a formal gavel for our Parliamentarian to be known as “Kiri’s Hammer” in perpetuity.

2. Past Events
   2.1. **Willy Week Coffee Break on Wednesday, March 20.** The coffee break celebrated Iranian food and culture and was successful.
   2.2. **Beer Bike on Saturday, March 23.** GSA Results: Alumni Race, 2nd Place; Women’s Race, 3rd Place; Men’s Race, 5th Place. Will Rice swept for 1st Place in all races. GSA accrued no penalties. For times, visit: http://rpc.rice.edu/beer-bike/beer-bike-results-2/
   2.3. **GSA Awards.** Announcement of the awardees. These awardees will be recognized at the Awards Banquet on May 2.
2.3.1. Faculty Teaching & Mentoring Award
   2.3.1.1. Leo Costello
   2.3.1.2. Helena Michie
2.3.2. Faculty/Staff Service Award
   2.3.2.1. Kay McStay
   2.3.2.2. Rita Riley
2.3.3. "Friend of Rice Graduate" Students
   2.3.3.1. Alex Ferrance. Sadly accepted posthumously by
2.3.4. Robert Lowry Patten Award
   2.3.4.1. Arunima Ray
   2.3.4.2. David Solis
   2.3.4.3. Heng Ji
   2.3.4.4. Jeff Ahern
2.3.5. GSA Service Award
   2.3.5.1. Anne Hellebust
   2.3.5.2. Kiri Kilpatrick

2.4. Elevator Pitch Competition on April 12, 2013, 5-9pm. The Elevator Pitch was cancelled when one of the judges suffered a medical emergency during the competition. All agree that the presentations before the cancellation impressed both in terms of content and delivery. GSA is working with administration to reschedule the event.

2.5. 7th Annual GSA Crawfish Boil on April 5, 2013. The event was a success with higher attendance than last year.

3. Upcoming Events
   3.1. Safety and Security at Rice - Panel Discussion on Thursday, April 18th, at 1:00 PM. A panel discussion for students with representatives of RUPD and their campus safety and security consultants.
   3.2. OISS-GSA Mentor Event. A pilot program for graduate student mentoring of undergraduates. They received so many responses to their call for applications that they had to limit it to 20 applicants. Meeting tomorrow to evaluate the program.
   3.3. Parranda Latina on Friday, April 19th, at 5:30pm. We are collaborating with the LAGSA to co-present a party to celebrate the end of the semester.
   3.4. PLAT 3.0 Launch Event on Friday, April 19th, at 6:30pm. This will be a revamped event with film, live music performance, and exhibitions and installation by students in Anderson Hall.
   3.5. Humanities GSA officer elections on Wednesday, April 17, at 6pm.
   3.6. MLS Elections

4. New Business
   4.1. Graduate Housing Representative - David Ramirez. David is an RA at RVA. He is the first incumbent in the position of Graduate Student Housing Liaison whose role is to increase and improve communications between Housing and the GSA. The GSA's International Student Liaison Barbara Redeker will serve in a reverse capacity with Housing.
   4.2. Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) survey - Arunima Ray and Barbara Redeker. Aru and Barbara are new representatives to the Teaching Committee. Rice recognizes their teachers and graduate
student teachers-in-training need more support. The current lack of training diminishes our competitiveness on the job market. The one of the roles of this committee is to improve teaching resources and opportunities available to Rice graduate students. To that end, the CTE has designed a graduate student survey to assess current opportunities and to improve and replace the current Brown Bag teaching certificate program. Currently 80% of students don’t have opportunities to teach. They are currently considering the training format that would best serve student needs, i.e. a one-day workshop at the beginning of fall for incoming teaching assistants. Michael Sinai contributed that the School of Architecture has a summer program called Launch to interest high school students in architecture that provides teaching opportunities for their grad students. One challenge will be to allow departments and schools to maintain their autonomy in terms of making the decision of what teacher training and opportunities to make available to their students.

4.3. Survey URL: tinyurl.com/GSAteachingsurvey

5. Rice Women’s Resource Center - Michelle Sneck. Michelle is the new graduate student liaison to the Rice Women’s Resource Center. Her goal is to get more graduate students involved. The Center organizes programs like Consent Week and These Hands Don’t Hurt, much of which is geared to undergrads, but also interests us, for example, the self-defense courses. She will advocate for more graduate-student focused programs.

6. New rep from Earth Science: Michael Farner. Michael is a first-year student in the department.