GSA Council Meeting Agenda — May 2013
Tuesday, May 21, 2013, 6:00 pm
Graduate Lounge, RMC

Attendees: Mauro A. Rinaldi (BCB), JD Dornell (BCB), Alex Tatara (BioE), Anne Hellebust (BioE), Navid Sakharand (CEVE), Lauren Popp (CHBE), Kiri Kilpatrick (CHBE), Andie Schlather (Chem), Milind Chabbi (CS), David Ramirez (Housing/ECE), Michelle Sneck (EEB), Michelle Downey (EEB), Kim Vincent (EEB), Chinh Nguyen (ESCL), Suraya Khan (History), Carolyn Van Wingerden (Hist. Art), Melissa Venator (Hist. Art), Arunima Ray (Math), Pei Dong (MEMS), John King (MLS), Maria Knowles (MLS), Christopher Dohna (Philosophy), Jacob Wahlen-Strothman (Physics), Debshila Basu Mallick (Psych), Goat Domeracki (Religious Studies), Nathanael Homewood (Religious Studies), Sarah Tooth (Stats).

1. New Business

1.1.1. Information Technology (IT) Introduction and Discussion. Carlyn Chatfield, Manager, IT Technical Communications

Carlyn Chatfield and her colleague Carlos Solis, Manager of Educational Technologies, visited to discuss how IT can help grad students on campus. In terms of organization, IT is divided into different groups that focus on teaching and research. IT is always ready to receive graduate student suggestions and solving our problems.

Carlos offered tips on educational technology. 1. His office offers Owlspace (OS) group and one-on-one training sessions. 2. For those teaching in the coming academic year, there is a new (OS) feature just released. ‘Lessons’ lets you organize handouts, quizzes, and other resources in a modular fashion (to collect different types of resources in the same folder). He is happy to organize training sessions for this new feature. 3. This fall IT is launching a new OS video delivery infrastructure for the whole university that operates similarly to YouTube. Useful features include a) the ability to record actions on your computer; and b) the screening of copyrighted films (because through OS). 4. Carlos can also help organize IT solutions for a thesis defense with an out-of-town committee member. For more information about these and other resources, contact: edtech@rice.edu.

Information from Q&A session:

Students expressed concern about the poor quality of computer equipment in some buildings. Here is some background about how maintenance of classroom computers works. Classrooms are managed (‘owned’) by either the university or a department. The University gives IT limited funds for maintenance of university-owned classroom computers. IT puts classrooms on a four-year equipment maintenance/replacement schedule, and then manages that schedule for all university-owned classrooms. Departments determined the maintenance schedule for the classrooms it manages. If you encounter problems with classroom computing resources, submit an IT Help Desk ticket to report the problem, but also ask who ‘owns’ that particular classroom.

IT will record your lecture, but you have to submit a special request.

The fastest way to get answers for OS questions is to submit a HelpDesk ticket.
1.1.2. Votes

1.1.2.1. Faculty Advisor. Scott McGill, Associate Professor, Department of Classical Studies

Elected. Prof. McGill teaches Latin, Ancient Greek, and Roman Culture and History. He got his PhD from Yale in 2001, so the memory is still vivid for him: both the excitement and the challenges. He has no grad students of his own (Classical Studies has no grad program), so he misses the grad student culture and our world. He has been at Rice since 2001, and will advance to full-professor status in July. Last year he was Acting Director of Humanities Research Center and was on Faculty Senate.

The faculty advisor’s responsibilities are to keep us informed about faculty concerns and opportunities.

1.1.2.2. Officer Position. Michelle Sneck for Lounge Manager

Elected. Michelle has been serving as interim Lounge Manager for about a month. She wants to continue to use Coffee Breaks to draw attention to under-acknowledged clubs on campus. She also looks forward to leading the planned lounge renovation this summer.

1.1.2.3. GSA Lounge Name Change

Approved: to rename the GSA Lounge the Purvez and Jennifer Captain Lounge. The purpose of this renaming is to recognize Purvez and Jennifer’s exceptional contributions to the GSA over many years, and it contributes to a larger initiative to document and celebrate the GSA’s organizational history. In so doing, we will strengthen the organization’s group identity. The name change will be permanent.

1.1.2.4. New Club Approvals

1.1.2.4.1. Society of Petroleum Engineers Rice Student Chapter

Not approved. No representatives from the club were present.

1.1.2.5. 2013-14 GSA Budget

Approved as proposed.

Discussion of select line items.

Lounge – funds for programming in the Lounge, not for its renovations.

International Event Programming – funds for Graduate International Cultural Night (GICN) and Graduate International Leadership Summit (GILS).

Professional development – Propose increased funding to increase activities in this area. Michael is out-of-town for the rest of the summer, but he is currently preparing an audit of all of the professional development opportunities on campus open to graduate students. He will share the results of this audit when it is complete and use its findings to determine how best to use the GSA’s professional development resources.

Community service – Propose increased funding at the request of Community Service Chair
Orientation – Reduction proposed reflects our desire to not give $3,000 for the O-week concert.

Awards – Increase proposed funding includes permanent plaques for new lounge name and permanent plaques and gifts for a new set of awards that recognizes individuals who have served in three or more officer positions (including Valahalla managers). We are considering other ways to recognize other long-term participants.

Lounge – Proposed funding for renovation designed to improve the appearance and functioning of the space and to better reflect our identity and status on campus. It is unlikely that the RMC remodeling will happen in the next 5 years. Even so, the renovations are designed to be reversible and/or reusable in the unlikely event the lounge is relocated.

Later changes. Once the budget is approved, any later changes will be put to a Council vote.

1.1.3. Lounge committee
Michelle would like to organize a committee to run the remodeling. Andie Schlather (Chem.) and Sarah Tooth (Stats.) volunteered.

2. Upcoming Events

2.1.1. GSA and LGBTQ Pride Month Kickoff Coffee Break. Wed., May 29, 3pm, GSA Lounge.

3. Past Events.


3.1.2. Parranda Latina/Spring Picnic. April 19. Attracted more people than our typical Spring Picnic, and the Latin food and music were a welcome change from the regular cookout. We plan to continue this collaborative model of event planning in the future.

3.1.3. GPS/GSA Elevator Pitch Competition. May 2. Brief discussion of ways to increase participation by non-engineering students. Suggestions include: changing the event name (as ‘elevator pitch’ has poor name recognition outside of engineering), publicize judges from other schools (to counter perceptions of poor representation), emphasize (cash) prizes.

3.1.4. GSA Reps Retreat. May 6.

3.1.5. Ally Training. May 17. Will be offered again in the Fall.

3.1.6. GSA Day at the Ballpark. May 18.