Council Minutes for October 20th, 2015 - 6:00pm

Meeting Opened: 6:02pm

In attendance:

- Officers: Lynn Fahey, Alessandra Forcucci, Catherine Majors, Nick Trenton, Peshal Nayak, Emily Thomas
- Directors: Jesse Choe, Mehbuba Tanzid, Sarah Kim, Andrea Miranda
- Program Representatives: Evio Isaac (Architecture), Rachel Harmeyer (Art History), Ruda Cui (Biochemistry and Cell Biology), Sam Paulsen (Bioengineering), Alicia Mangubat (Chemistry), Carl Bernier (Civil & Environmental Engineering), Temitayo Ajayi (Computational and Applied Mathematics), Jacob Gao (Computer Science), Lexi Malouta & Ruthie Halberstadt (Earth Sciences), Shannon Carter (Ecology and Evolutionary Biology), Shasha Liu (Economics), Christina Regelski (History), Diane Glick (Master of Liberal Studies), Miriam Kuzbary (Mathematics), Eleazar Marquez (Mechanical Engineering), Alice Hong & Charlotte Nicholas (Shepherd School of Music), David Erdel (Philosophy), Jacob M. Wahlen-Strothman (Physics and Astronomy), Santiago Sosa (Political Science), Vanessa Neutzler (Professional Masters in Science), Bradley Johnson (Religious Studies), Jonathan Steward (Statistics)
- Cultural Representatives: Souptik Barua (ISAR)
- Grants Representatives: Guests: Carolyn Van Wingerden (Art History), Kyle Sweeney (Art History)
- Guests: Kiri Kilpatrick (GPS), Andy Meretoja (OISS), Karin Shipman (Master of Liberal Studies Alumni), Ziwei Zhou (Professional Science Masters - EDAM Track), Emily Evans (Bioengineering)

Welcome New Reps
- Carl Bernier - Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Alice Hong & Charlotte Nicholas - Shepherd School of Music

Discuss of Rice’s Future with Campus Carry
- Texas Senate Bill 11 - Signed Governor Abbott, June 13th
  - Public institutions are required to allow people to carry guns on campus
  - Private institutions can prevent licensed gun owners from carrying on campus
- Current Rice Policy prohibits firearms and weapons on campus
  - However, people are concerned about the number of robberies
    - Perhaps increased police presence on campus would help if we do not want private owners of gun
  - Mostly a political statement since we don’t actually check for weapons on people in buildings
  - Rice RUPD is giving presentations on active shooter
    - It’s at the BRC at noon on Monday, October 25th
- Rice has asked us as the GSA to talk it over with
- The GSA is giving the representatives a chance to talk it over with their departments and programs
- The GSA asks reps to do a thorough questioning of their department to see how students feel about this and where they are comfortable/not comfortable having guns
- The GSA would like the representatives to bring back departmental views on the matter to Council Meeting next month (November 17th)
  - We are not requiring quantitation of your department, but we would like you to talk to as many people as possible.
    - For more information, go to texassenatebill11blogs.rice.edu
    - GSA/GPS created a web forum for graduate students to discuss this issue in an anonymized fashion: http://gradsb11blogs.rice.edu/
      - We think that this forum will help us unearth bigger issues that people are concerned about will this policy
      - Ultimately Rice administration will come up a policy, but we are able to direct that policy through our view
    - We need a decision by Thanksgiving, so we will make it at our November Council Meeting
    - If you are interested in helping with the task force to address this matter, send an email to gsa@rice.edu
- Safety Walkabout wit RUPD - Evening of Monday, October 26th - 6pm to 9:30pm
  - This is a walk around campus to unearth possible places where people may feel unsafe and document them so they may be addressed
  - It's a partnership of undergraduate and graduate students with the RUPD
  - Sign up at gsa@rice.edu
- Grants Updates
  - GSA Activity and Enrichment Grants Statuses
    - IEW Mini Soccer World Cup
      - Funded - $256
    - The Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies
      - Funded - $1000
    - BioSciences Department BBQ
      - Funded - $250
    - ChBE Fall Networking Event
      - Funded - $250
    - **We have a total of $15,000 - Budget year July to June**
      - **We have spent $7,129**
    - GSA Activity Grants are now limited to four per year per a club
    - Travel grants budgets is very low, only two grants left to fund until June
    - Our current travel grant gives $500 per an applicant once a year
      - It covers almost all expenses excluding alcohol
        - Food
        - Hotels
Airfare/transportation

- The GSA needs to rethink how we give out travel grants
  - We can ask for budgets to see exactly where our funds are going and make the process a little more onerous so that we are not the first choice to look for funding.
  - We can ask that an applicant have applied other places and give us evidence (either rejections or acceptances).
  - We can ask for department to email saying that they don’t have funds so that we target the people that do not have other funding sources.
  - Email gsa@rice.edu with more idea

- The GSA can talk to departments and problem labs about why they can’t fund their students to see what issues may be underlying this need.
- The GSA can create a list of other funding sources to check first as well so that for the people we turn down can seek funding elsewhere.

Committee Positions:

- Student Health Insurance (2-3 positions)
  - The GSA will send out this opportunity in GSA Announcements
  - Or we welcome applicants to email gsa@rice.edu

- Passport to Houston (1 position)
  - This program give free admission into the zoo, MFA, etc.
    - Graduate students are mostly exempted because Passport to Houston is partially funded through undergraduate fees.
  - The GSA will send out this opportunity in GSA Announcements
  - Or we welcome applicants to email gsa@rice.edu

Club Approvals (15 voting members present to approve)

- Engineering Professional Masters Club
  - 14 in favor
  - 1 opposed
  - Engineering Professional Masters Club is now an official Rice GSA Club

- Reading Club
  - 15 in favor
  - None opposed/abstained
  - Reading Club is now an official Rice GSA Club

- SGI Rice Student Division
  - 15 in favor
  - None opposed/abstained
  - SGI Rice Student Division is now an official Rice GSA Club

- Society for Anthropological Debate
  - 15 in favor
  - None opposed/abstained
  - Society for Anthropological Debate is now an official Rice GSA Club

- Students for the Exploration and Development of Space at Rice
- 15 in favor
- None opposed/abstained
- Students for the Exploration and Development of Space at Rice is now an official Rice GSA Club
  - Ethnography Studio
    - 14 in favor
    - 1 abstained
    - Ethnography Studio is now an official Rice GSA Club

**Open Forum**

- Recent changes in the Greenbriar/RVA route to try to force it to a fifteen minute schedule have made the bus unpredictable
  - Graduate students would prefer the assurance of the twenty minute route where it waits at RVA until the designated time
- The GSA would like SJP to rethink their sticker policy on IDs as it unfairly hinders international students from attending, can cause issues with out-of-state IDs still being valid (some official do not like stickers on IDs), and seems inconsistent since guests do not need to get an owl sticker
  - Possible Solutions
    - Place an owl sticker on the student ID, so international students do not have to worry about putting an owl sticker on their passport and domestic students do not have to worry about putting a sticker on their driver’s license
    - Organize a bus to take international students to get a Texas ID so they do not need the owl sticker
    - Put our date of birth on our student IDs so that there is no need for stickers

**Future events**

- Family Weekend occurs on October 23-24th
  - Check GSA Facebook page and the GSA Weekly Announcements for more details on schedule and activities for parents, children, spouses, and everyone else that you consider family!
  - A summary of activities
    - Coffee in the morning with President Leebron
    - Lab and campus tours
    - Coffee break from 3pm to 5pm in the GSA Captain’s Lounge, Fondren Library sponsoring
    - Movie at Valhalla, Big Hero 6
    - Saturday - Tailgating starts at 9 am, football game (Rice vs Army) starts at 11am
- Presidential Assembly of Graduate Executives Social (PAGES) - Wednesday, November 4th, 6:00pm-7:30pm, Farnsworth (RMC)
  - This is a new event designed to get presidents of all clubs together to help them collaborate and more effectively use funding
- Valhallaween - Saturday, October 31st, 8pm-12am, Valhalla
  - Annual event celebrating Halloween at Valhalla
  - It is a great party with food, music, and a costume contest.
- Fall Picnic: Deepotsav - Partnering with Indian Students at Rice (ISAR) - Thursday, November 12th, 5pm-9pm, Grand Hall (RMC)
  - Celebrates Diwali, the Indian Festival of Lights
  - Food, dance, fashion show, DJ, and lights
- Fondren Coffee Break - Friday, October 23rd, 3pm-5pm, Captain’s Lounge
  - A librarian will come to answer questions and provide library goodies

- Past Event
  - CWOVC & CCD Coffee Break
    - The event went very well
    - It allowed people to go over their resume with the CCD
      - You can still get your resume reviewed by the CCD, you just need to set up an appointment through RICELink (Bottom left of the https://ccd.rice.edu/home/ page).
  - Career Workshop
    - The GSA had representatives from 8 different companies and over a hundred Rice grad students attend the event
    - The GSA will try to build momentum with this and have more professional development events in the future

Meeting closed: 7:16pm