

Graduate Student Association Meeting Agenda

Date: July 15, 2020

Time: 4pm-6:12pm

Location: Virtual Meeting

Presiding Officer: Holly Gruntner (President)

- 1) Introductions
 - a) Began meeting at 4:02
 - b) 24 people present
 - i) Officers: All present
 - ii) Department Representatives
 - (1) American Studies (Meagan Thompson), Anthropology (Caroline Watson), Computer Science (Hannah Jones), History (Jasper Conner), Psychological sciences (Annabelle Bass, Peter Varga), Physics Rep (Colin Egerer) present
 - (2) Applied Science, Biology, Chemistry, still seeking reps
 - iii) 7 Guests
- 2) Welcome to GSA! – Holly (President)
 - a) Meetings once per month
 - i) While meetings are typically once a month, GSA may temporarily shift to bi-weekly meetings to address the higher volume of issues regarding COVID-19 and to address diversity, inclusion, and racial justice goals.
 - b) Access to Google Drive
 - i) New members should have access to the Google Drive, where there are “officer folders” containing position descriptions and other relevant documents
- 3) Public Comment
 - a) No public comments
- 4) Updates
 - a) Virtual orientation – Holly (President)
 - i) New Student Orientation will be held virtually via Blackboard modules
 - ii) JC and GSA will contribute a video to the virtual orientation to reach new students
 - b) Upcoming Townhall
 - i) The new Dean of A&S, Maria Donoghue Valleca, and Dean Torczan, are planning a town hall meeting for graduate students to ask questions about the upcoming school year. (Date pending).
 - c) Student Assembly Update – Chardé (SA Representative)
 - i) SA and the Student Bar Association is sponsoring a campus-wide Racial Justice & Social Reform Speaker series addressing race relations at William and Mary. The first was held on Juneteenth (June 19th), the next will be held July 20th – a greater graduate student presence at future events should be priority
 - ii) SA held a special session July 7th passing a suite of resolutions focused on police brutality, discrimination, and racism on campus, as well as W&M’s COVID-19 response. SA also added new cabinet positions aimed at improving graduate student relations.
 - (1) SA’s Ad Hoc Reparations Committee is seeking committee members – those interested should contact Will Wasson (wawasson@email.wm.edu)
 - (2) For more details:
<https://www.wm.edu/sites/studentassembly/announcements/legislation-passed-by-the-328th-senate-of-student-assembly.php>

- d) Jasper Conner: the Principles for Renaming and Naming Working Group is meeting Monday, July 20 from 5-6
- 5) Black Lives Matter – Everyone
 - a) Discuss GSA's next steps & Keyyatta Bonds's letter [attachment]
 - i) GSA will create a standing taskforce with the goal of combatting racial injustice. The committee will be comprised of GSA and non-GSA members – GSA will prioritize reaching out to the Black Graduate Student Association to solicit membership, before putting out a public call.
 - ii) This committee will draft a concrete plan of action, that will be made public by September 1st in response to Bond's letter, and published on social media using Bond's suggested hashtag (#WMOrgDI20)
 - iii) Such a committee will also serve as representatives within the future Graduate Council coalition dedicated to diversity, inclusion, and racial justice; Grad council will meet in August to begin assembling this coalition.
 - iv) A special GSA session will take place July 22, 2020 at 4pm in order to continue this conversation and plan next steps in achieving a)-c) and beyond.
 - (1) Currently participating members: Holly (President), Tomos (Vice Presedent), Richard, Philip (Grad Council Treasurer), Caroline (Anthropology Rep), Hannah (CS Rep), Chardé (SA Rep), Annabelle Bass (Psych Rep), Casey (GSAB Science Rep), Meagan (Am Studies Rep), Cam, Zeke (Parlamentarian)
- 6) School in the Time of Covid – Everyone
 - a) How should GSA operate in the Fall?
 - i) Meeting formats:
 - (1) GSA meetings will be held virtually until further notice (Approved by vote: 11 in favor, 1 opposed)
 - ii) GSA and Journal Club Funding Update
 - (1) Dean Torczon requested a budget proposal from GSA and JC for the 2020-2021 year (see "Future Events")
 - iii) Future Events – Phillip
 - (1) GSA will consider a mix of in-person and virtual events, and hybrid and asynchronous options
 - (2) Events with in-person components will be outside, or if inside, following Stage 3 guidelines. Any food or drink provided will be pre-packaged and potentially served by GSA members to reduce contact. GSA will consider RSVP-only events in order to control for attendance or encourage events that can happen as a series of smaller, physically distanced gatherings. Masks will be required. Events will primarily be non-alcoholic.
 - (3) Additional expenses will include materials like gloves and hand sanitizer, as well as added costs for pre-packaged food options.
 - (4) Suggested events include outdoor activities, like GSA sponsored hikes, kayaking, or picnic-style movie-night, coordinated service events targeted at the local community or larger charities, and rapid session research presentations
 - (a) Email Philip (plemanuel@email.wm.edu) with other ideas
 - b) The ICE announcement for A&S international grad students (pending) – Tomos
 - (1) The ICE announcement has been rescinded for students already living in the country
- 7) GSA Website – Taylor
 - a) Website updates
 - i) Officer profiles will be added to the website; a short survey will be circulated to officers, and posted to the website by the start of August

- ii) Website will be improved with updated photos and graphics
- iii) What additional resources should be added?
 - (1) Graduate FAQ page – a general aid for graduate student life, information on food or things to do at W&M.
 - (2) A page dedicated to Teaching/Teaching Assistant resources, specifically documents drafted by Holly with Stetson House
 - (3) Designing a new GSA logo – either internally, or through a campus-wide competition

8) Open Floor – Everyone

- a) Comment 1, Physics Graduate Student: “Is there anything other departments are doing regarding the GRE requirement for admission? I know in physics some universities are waiving it since the GRE COVID response has not been great: an article about this is <https://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2020/06/graduate-programs-drop-gre-after-online-version-raises-concerns-about-fairness> . In Physics, the PGSA was thinking of asking our admissions committee to waive it or have some options for applicants, but we might need other departments to push this kind of measure too if this is required by A&S.”
 - i) Holly and Tomos will bring up these GRE issues to the Deans during their upcoming meeting.
- b) Comment 2, Anthropology Graduate Student: Expressed concern about the safety of hosting in-person events during the pandemic, and articulated concern that in-person events are particularly problematic for individuals with underlying health risks. Student asked that GSA take it slow in planning in-person events.
 - i) This comment was further emphasized by Meagan (Am Studies Rep), who additionally requested that GSA members speak with the Deans about students who opt-out of in person classes due to safety concerns: will they suffer academically (or otherwise) as a result?
- c) Comment 3: Holly and Tomos will push to for the upcoming Graduate Student Townhall event to be a live Q&A, rather than a pre-screened format.

9) Meeting Adjourned at 6:12