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1.1 DEPARTMENT MEETING OVERVIEW

1) Scheduling and General Information

- a) Email the Treasurer, Bill (treasurer.gsa@yale.edu) **with the date you plan to hold your department meeting to get authorization to use the p-card, the graduate school credit card.**
 - i) **Give 2 weeks notice in advance of the meeting. This will ensure the p-card is available for this date.** Bill will respond back with the official authorization, instructions for p-card use, and a list of documents you must submit (see 1.2).
 - ii) **Please use the p-card instead of your own personal credit card to purchase food and drinks.** Only under special circumstances can you use your own personal credit card/cash.
- b) You should schedule your meeting during the Fall Semester. Please notify Bill if you need a later date.
- c) You are allowed to spend up to **\$100/rep/year** to hold your meeting. Department representatives can work together to host one event. Also, departments with overlapping student issues and concerns can hold joint department meetings.

2) Holding Your Meeting

- a) Advertise Your Meeting
 - i) Make sure to send an email to your constituents a week in advance of the meeting. Your department's registrar or student services officer can help you with the email list.
- b) General Guidelines
 - i) Plan on the meeting lasting 45 minutes to 1 hour.
 - ii) Format
 - (1) Introduction to the GSA:
 - (a) Representatives should provide an overview of the GSA (our goals, accomplishments, works in progress) and find out what issues students would like addressed.
 - (i) General statement on the GSA:

The GSA is an elected body of graduate students representing all departments and degree-seeking programs in the Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. We work closely with Yale administrative offices to improve graduate students' academic, social, and living experiences at Yale.
 - (2) Projects and accomplishments
 - (a) Section (2.1) provides a list of past and current GSA projects and programs. This is not all-inclusive list and is meant to serve as a starting point to introducing the work of the GSA. Feel free to focus on the topics that fit the needs of your constituents.
 - (3) Soliciting feedback and generating discussion
 - (a) Section (3.1) lists a number of questions each Chair has come up with to solicit feedback. These questions are best used as a guide to facilitate discussion. While it is nice to go through each question, the best feedback comes from constituent concerns. Therefore, each representative should focus on the topics most relevant to their department.
 - c) Questions regarding how to hold a meeting should be directed to the Chair
 - d) Please submit the documents below (see 1.2) along with the p-card to Theresa Dio in HGS 134 by the date specified in the authorization email.



3) Qualtrics Survey

- a) After you hold your meeting, you must fill out the questionnaire (see 3.1) on Qualtrics:
- b) Make sure you have a record of the charges you have made. You will be required to write the amount and the venues on the Qualtrics survey.

4) Report to the General Assembly

- a) Each department meeting will be followed up by a brief (3 minute) summary report to the General Assembly. After the meeting is held, Bill will confirm the General Assembly report date. Below is a rubric that we highly encourage you to use for this report.

i) Report Rubric and Guidelines

(1) In a 3 minute report please try to cover:

- (a) *Major* or recurring issues specific to your meeting.
 - (b) Issues of general interest that you think GSA might not be aware of.
 - (c) New ideas generated at your meeting.
 - (d) Questions that GSA might be able to answer
- ii) Issues we have discussed before or that are not of general interest should still be summarized at length in Qualtrics, but not all information needs to be discussed in the assembly. **You might also get in touch with the relevant committee chair to relay specific requests and needs (for example, requests for more blue lights should be sent directly to the Transit & Security chair).**



When you return the p-card, please submit **ALL** of the following documents at the same time to Theresa Dio HGS 134. **Do not submit the documents separately.**

(1) The credit card charge slip.

- a. This receipt contains the total amount charged when you swipe the card at the vendor/restaurant. Make sure the vendor's name is printed on the receipt. Please write your name legibly on top of this receipt.

(2) An itemized receipt.

- a. The credit card slip usually only contains the total amount, but the Graduate School also needs to know what the money was spent on. This can be a hand-written or printed document, but it has to come from the vendor that swiped the card. You **CANNOT** write this yourself. The credit card charge slip (above, see 1.2.1) and itemized receipt is sometimes combined into one invoice.

(3) An attendance list.

- a. Please have everyone attending print his or her name on a sheet of paper.

(4) An invitation or an agenda for the event.

(5) A printout of the authorization email that you received from the treasurer.

Please hand (1)-(5) to Theresa Dio in HGS 134 when you return the card or upon the completion of your meeting. The Treasurer does not need to have any of the documentation but please keep a record of the amount you have charged and the name of the vendor(s) so you can write it in Qualtrics.

If you must use your personal credit card, you can pay with your own credit card upon approval. If this is the case, you also need to submit (1)-(5) **and (6) your net ID. Once the expense report has been submitted, you will get an email from Yale. You must approve the expense report by responding to the email. Reimbursements will be made to your student account.**

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Bill treasurer.gsa@yale.edu

Notes:

- Vendors like to copy down the credit card numbers and charge the card on the day of the event. Please make sure that the credit card numbers are not written down anywhere. Instead, swipe the credit card. Please speak to the treasurer before placing phone orders.
- **Yale is tax exempt** so you do not pay tax when paying with the p-card. The CT tax-exempt code is printed on the p-card in small black print.
- Please observe the budget allowance for the event. You will be reminded of the maximum allowance in the authorization email.
- Please return the p-card by the time outlined in the authorization email.

2.1 SELECTED 2013 - 2014 AND 2014-2015 GSA PROJECTS

A. PROGRAMS

1. Conference Travel Fellowship (continuing)

- A program administered by the GSA that provides \$60,000 of funding each year to graduate students presenting papers or posters at regional, national, and international conferences.

2. Ask-A-Lawyer Sessions (continuing)

- Access to free one-on-one legal advice during Ask-A-Lawyer events, and a list of legal professionals who will provide free 30-minute consultations and reduced rates after that. The list has been compiled with the aid of Yale's Office of the General Counsel, and can be requested from the office of Dean Robert Harper-Mangels.
- Free Ask-A-Lawyer sessions include help on highly sought after topics such as landlord-tenant legal advice through workshops.

3. Ask-An-Accountant (Continuing)

- Access to free advice for filing state and federal taxes.
- Separate sessions are held for both US citizens and Non-citizen residents.

4. Mentoring (continuing)

- Mentoring awards
- Common Grounds

B. COMPLETED PROJECTS

1. Mental Health Report

- In fall 2012, the GSA and GPSS jointly commissioned a comprehensive review of mental health at Yale. The report's recommendations focus on adding more staff and resources to Mental Health, improving the mental health culture on campus, and providing greater outreach and publicity.
- The final report was written by an ad hoc committee of graduate and professional students, and was approved by GSA and GPSS in September 2013. The report was also presented to the Yale Health Plan's Member Advisory Committee. Members of the GSA and GPSS are now working with Chief Psychiatrist Dr. Lorraine Siggins and other members of the Yale Health administration to implement some of the report's recommendations.
- Link to the report <http://gsa.yale.edu/fhc-projects-and-proposals>

2. Graduate Student Teaching Opportunities website

- The Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) has identified teaching as a major concern of graduate students. We successfully advocated for a review of the Teaching Fellows Program to address fairness and transparency in the teaching fellow (TF) allocation process within and beyond departments.
- One outcome this work was the creation of the Graduate Student Teaching Opportunities website. <http://yaleteachingopps.org>

3. GSA Strategic Plan 2014

- Through the GSA departmental meetings and university wide surveys collected, the GSA compiled a report highlighting and prioritizing current graduate student needs with both short and long term recommendations to address these issues and guide the future Assembly's actions.



- Report can be found Here: <http://gsa.yale.edu/strategicplan2014>

4. Yale Dean of Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Search

The 2013-2014 GSA Chair solicited feedback from departmental reps on features/characters their constituents wanted to see in the next Dean and compiled issues that they felt should be a priority for the next Dean and Yale.

C. ONGOING PROJECTS

1. Student Space

- A recurring theme in surveys has been the lack of dedicated student work space.
- Currently trying to create 24-hour access to student space, as well as finding space for departments that lack access to such facilities.

2. Housing Initiatives

- The purpose of this initiative is to identify and advise the administration on both on and off campus housing issues, and to provide input into the university's strategic planning for graduate and professional housing overall.
- At the urging of the GSA and GPSS, the university formed the Student Advisory Committee on Graduate and Professional Housing in the fall of 2013.
- Achieved approval from the Yale Corporation for the construction of a new graduate dormitory located on Elm Street next to Tyco Printing. The new dormitory will house approximately 70 students, with expected completion in 2016.
- Commissioned, built, and improved housing websites that features the ability for students to rate off-campus housing and their landlords.
<http://offcampushousing.yale.edu>
<http://offcampusliving.yale.edu/resources>
- Commenced a series of meetings with large off-campus landlords to address common problems reported by graduate students.
- Held the first annual Yale Housing Fair for Graduate and Professional Students. Sponsored by the GSA and the School of Medicine, several hundred students were able to meet with representatives from 13 New Haven properties and 1 realty company

3. Improved Shuttle Routes

- Every year the GSA receives feedback from students about their needs for safe and timely transport across campuses.
- The Transit and Security committee compiled and presented this feedback to the Yale Transportation Administrators, which resulted in a number of route alternations including the inclusion of the "to door" line departing from 333 Cedar Street servicing east and west boundaries of Yale.

4. Career Services

- Recommendations were compiled and brought to the attention of former GSAS Dean Tom Pollard and new GSAS Dean Lynn Cooley, which helped to result in the merging of Graduate Career Services with the Office of Career Strategy. <http://ocs.yale.edu>



- The GSA is currently working closely with the office to help transition the organization to meet the needs of graduate students.
- The GSA is also currently working with the Graduate Student Alumni Association to improve networking opportunities for the graduate student community.

5. Teaching Review

- At this point, this is still an internal (GSA) review, but we are working to collect data both from here and at our peer institutions about how successful the teaching program is for the job market, and how it is administered (in terms of appropriateness of assignment, fairness between departments, etc.) to move the review towards higher official levels.
- Working towards getting 6th year funding is inherent in this review as most 6th year students fund themselves through teaching.

6. Mental Health Access

- The GSA is continuing its commitment to improving mental health awareness and access at Yale.

7. Expanding Gym and Library Hours

- Created a joint report with GPSS evaluating gym hours across all the Ivy League Institutions (and MIT)
- Found that Yale has the fewest number of hours available to students.
- Proposed several extended gym hour pilot programs
- Secretary and Vice President of Student Life, Kim Goff-Crews is currently evaluating the report.
- The GSA will continue its efforts to improve Gym and Library access

8. Student Life Center

- GSA spearheaded a joint effort between the Yale College Council, the GPSS and GSA to research the need for a student center on Yale's campus designed to service all Yale students and to foster a community among all Yale students. We are currently conducting an environmental scan of peer institutions.

9. Student Life Website

- A conversation with GSA and GPSS with the Office of the Secretary and Vice President for Student Life resulted in a new student life.
- <http://studentlife.yale.edu>
- The site curates a wide variety of information relevant to all students learning and living at Yale. Offering information on course registration, housing, recreation, childcare options, and serves as a host for sites at Yale and beyond that caters to student needs and interests.
- This project hopes to improve communications about student life services and to establish a greater sense of connection with the larger University community.

3.1 DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

1. Academic & Professional Development

- a. What placement support and services does your department currently provide? What do you wish they provided?
- b. How do you feel about the new Office of Career Strategy? What kind of additional services would you like to see the Office of Career Strategy provide?
- c. What Teaching and Learning Center resources would be helpful?
- d. How do you think you should be trained as a TF?
- e. What experiences do you wish to gain as a TF while you're at Yale?
- f. How important is learning how to teach online to you? What kinds of training do you wish to get for teaching online?
- g. Any academic and professional development concerns/comments/suggestions?

2. Transit & Security

- a. How do people in your department travel around campus (e.g. walking, biking, shuttle...)?
- b. Are there areas/intersections on or around campus that are of particular concern for pedestrian safety? How could pedestrian safety be improved?
- c. Are you satisfied with the bike safety and infrastructure (including bike racks) on or around campus? How could bike safety and infrastructure improved?
- d. Are you satisfied with the Yale Shuttle services? What improvements would you like to see?
- e. (For departments with laboratory work) Are you satisfied with the laboratory safety training/safety requirements in your department? How could the laboratory safety practices be improved?
- f. What would you like to see improve with security on campus and/or in your building? Are there areas that need better lighting or more blue security phones?
- g. General transit and security concerns?

3. Facilities & Healthcare

Healthcare:

- a. What could be improved about the mental health department and/or the mental health culture in general at Yale?
- b. How do you feel about the quality of health care provided at the health center?
- c. Are you satisfied with the currently available Delta Dental and/or EyeMed plan? If not, what would you like to see?

Facilities:

- d. Do you feel that you have sufficient designated space on-campus to do graduate work?
- e. Do you have a 24-hour workspace? If not, will having a 24-hour common non-department specific student space be beneficial to your success at Yale?
- f. What kinds of housing resources would be helpful?



- g. How important is the gym to you? What improvements would you like to see?
- h. HGS will be renovated in the near future.
 - 1. How do you envision this space?
 - 2. What would you like added to HGS?
 - 3. What are currently available features in HGS that you would like to keep?
- i. Other healthcare or facilities-related issue comments?

4. General or Department-Specific Feedback

- a. Student life:
 - 1. What are your feelings about student life at Yale?
 - 2. How would you like it changed?
 - 3. What programs and/or events would you like to see?
- b. Student organizations:
 - 1. Are you in a student organization? What are some of the challenges your organization faces? If you started a student group, how did you get started?
 - 2. What resources would be helpful to your organization?
 - 3. If you want to get involved, what would be helpful to you?
- c. Are you familiar with the Ask-A-Lawyer and Ask-An-Accountant events GSA provides? Comments?
- d. Are you familiar with the Conference Travel Fellowship? Comments?
- e. Are you familiar with Common Grounds? Comments?
- f. Any GSA event/program suggestions?
- g. Any department-specific concerns?
- h. Any other general comments or feedback?