**GSA General Assembly Meeting**

January 20th, 2016

Meeting started at 6:45 PM

1. Approval of Agenda
	1. Agenda approved with no suggested changes.
2. Approval of Minutes
	1. Minutes approved with no suggested changes.
3. GSA Secretary Position Discussion
	1. Rachel, the current secretary, has a mandatory class that conflicts with GSA meetings. Katie read a prepared statement from Rachel, who suggested two outcomes for the issue:
		1. Proxy note taker; she will retain other responsibilities including administrative, Steering, and executive board responsibilities.
		2. Elect another secretary with Rachel overseeing transition.
		3. Either way, Rachel will continue to be a GSA rep and try to get a proxy departmental representative.
		4. Fabian (Economics) suggested continuity, since most of the secretary’s work takes place outside of the meeting.
		5. Wendy Xiao MD/PhD) asked what her tasks are: note taking at all meetings, emailing and administrative work for the board.
		6. Stefan Elrington (Physics) asked who writes agenda, Liz clarified that she takes care of this and that Rachel is responsible for sending out these materials.
		7. Vote by hand for each option
			1. Overwhelming majority to keep Rachel as secretary (Katie did not even count hands); No additional options submitted for discussion.
		8. Nick Vincent nominated himself as proxy note taker, and was the only submitted name, and so will continue in the role for the near future.
4. Department Meeting Reports
	1. Political Science – Max Krahé, Alicia Steinmetz, & Consuelo Amat Matus
		1. Max discussed the high interest in childcare and mental health issues in the political science department. Students were also very interested in the AAU Campus Climate Report
		2. The department has a position on changing the library—The Poly Sci department wants access to books over additional work space, and so is not in favor of the potential proposal to remove all books from Bass and turn it into a 24 hour study space.
		3. Dental and Eye plan discussion: different people have different needs and expectations. Some people want basic coverage, some people want a lot more. What should be communicated to negotiators? Don’t negotiate one size fits all, but get ranked programs with different options.
		4. Departmental problem with suggested solution: Problem is that TF assignment process left several people unhappy with assignment (not in their area, more or less work than they’re looking for, etc.). Create mechanism to recognize people who want more challenging TF positions—working with DGS to have letter of recommendation submission for these positions.
		5. Liz commented that current dental and eye plan set up is very difficult for negotiating ranked programs. Actual cost to the insurance company is more than we are submitting to them. Fear is that discussion may lead to the companies dropping us because we cost more than they bring in and they likely will want to get rid of us as a result.
		6. Brian Yoon (FES) explained that we are piggybacking on Yale’s employee deal with these programs, which is why we are able to get away with keeping the programs while the companies are losing money off of us.

* 1. Psychology – Katie Oltman, Monica Rosenberg, & Ashley Jordan
		1. Monica discussed Offices of Career Strategy and Teaching and Learning Center- half of the students present had heard of them, but only one has used OCS and found it useful. Some additional outreach might be necessary to get people involved.
		2. Concern about CTL- people said that staff is very nice and helpful, but sometimes the seminars don’t actually address what they are advertised to do. Students, obviously, were not too enthusiastic about this.
		3. TFing in the department- students only grade and give review sessions, but students want opportunities to teach, lecture, engage with students, etc.
		4. Atmosphere that does not prepare students for non-academic positions. Unspoken sentiment that people might judge you if you don’t pursue an academic career. This might go hand in hand with familiarity with OCS and their resources.
		5. Transit and Security concerns- confusing bus routes, when to call shuttle, when to take night route, where the stops are, etc. The apps that people use are not reliable, and all students were hoping for improvements on this front.
	2. Engineering and Applied Sciences – Holly Lauridsen, Andrés Muñoz Rojas, Linda Fong, James Gutierrez, Stacy Kanaan, & Matthew Paragano
		1. Holly discussed low turnout for department meeting, but stated that some common themes emerged.
		2. Students don’t like the new divisions for teaching and the pay scale for them.
		3. Bulk of issues centered on facilities, especially Mason. Students are starting to move into 15 Hillhouse, but lots of people in Mason are still upset. Quality of equipment is actually a problem with experiments. Facilities that have been updated aren’t being used—for example, new security gates at Amistad that are always open.
		4. More bike racks in out of the way spaces so that bikes are less likely to be stolen. Security cameras or better lighting near racks would be good too.
		5. Gym later hours are great, but need to advertise better, especially to new students. How is use of the gym being monitored? Lots of students are using places that are not the Ace Fitness Center.
		6. Add laser tag arena to the Schwarzman Center.
		7. Longer library hours. There used to be an engineering library, but it was lost (became the CEID—Center for Engineering Innovation and Design).
		8. Diversity/ AAU- students agreed that lots of the training is generic and easy to disregard, but hope for the creation of a hotline or online forum to anonymously report issues. Department issues? Then maybe have department-specific training to take care of the repetitive issues that are occurring.
		9. Max from Political Science mentioned that the change of gym hours was also very well received in Political Science.
	3. Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry – Sarah Smaga & Danielle Williams
		1. Danielle reported that mental health and transit and security were hot topics in the meeting.
		2. Mental health- concerns with wait list, wait time from intake to care, are people comfortable seeking out mental health services?—there is a fear of taking a leave of absence and not being readmitted. Therapy dog at Science Hill.
		3. Transit- make door-to-door system more Uber-like and app-based. People want more bike racks in front of Bass Center. Science Hill parking lot confuses door-to-door shuttle drivers since it is so large. Shuttles leave early from the parking lot, which causes problems.
		4. Students requested meeting places that are easily booked, or a centralized booking system to book common areas that can be reserved easily. Liz commented that this has been communicated to the administration, especially during the Schwarzman meeting discussions.
		5. Students were very happy with the gym hours.
	4. Microbiology – Nick Vincent
		1. Approximately 20% of the department works on West Campus, and there are distinct concerns regarding shuttle accessibility on weekends and shuttle safety (not all shuttles have seatbelts).
		2. There is a lot of confusion about shuttles at the train station and which direction they are going. Assembly members mentioned that the app has arrows showing the direction of the shuttle, and this may be helpful to some of the students.
		3. Student life and academics- Students feel very strongly about having a 24-hour space in the Schwarzman Center for ALL students regardless of affiliation (i.e. open to ALL undergraduate, graduate, and professional students). There were also questions about how money will be distributed for diversification of faculty hires? Can students help to decide how the money is spent?
		4. Regarding housing- students organized a housing packet for all interviewing students to help pass on information regarding good landlords/ bad landlords/ good places/ not great places/ etc. since the school or other organizations can’t publish a “no-go” list on landlords, buildings, etc.
		5. Lots of tax confusion! Some students asked about whether TurboTax could be made available from the Office of Financial Aid. International students have Glacier, but some international students said that it is confusing and does not always work well. Assembly members suggested H and R block, which is free if you do not electronically file, so you have to take the numbers and put them on the form yourself then send that in. There are also apparently ways to file for free on state websites. Andrew (Genetics) has some knowledge of resources that he will send to Liz to be distributed to assembly members and constituents.
1. Elections
	1. OCS Advisory Committee (one representative)
		1. OCS will form advisory committee of graduate students and post-docs to look at career development opportunities. They want to hear ideas about programming initiatives and how to improve current services. This could provide a great forum to talk about what other groups have done, encourage collaborations between student groups, etc.
		2. Nominations opened by Liz; Holly asked whether it is just short meetings or whether it is a prolonged commitment. Liz said she suspects it will go through the semester, but she does not know how often the committee will meet—likely once to twice a month for an hour.
		3. Carly Cox (MCDB) nominated herself.
		4. Liz moved to elections; election by acclimation. Carly elected with no opposing or abstaining votes.
2. Deep Dive: Panel Discussion on Faculty Recruitment, Tenure, and Retention
	1. New name: Building a Diverse Faculty: Recruitment, Tenure, and Retention. This will take place Tuesday, January 26 from 6 to 8 PM in Luce Hall. Reminders in newsletter, from Liz, Dean Cooley will send an email, and we may have postings in departments as well
	2. This grew from initial discussions with Dean Cooley. Four people on panel: Tamar Gendler, Richard Bribiescas, Michelle Nearon, and John Dovidio
	3. Liz wants a feel for questions students might be interested in:
		1. Consuelo Amat (Poly Sci): What is the system now for tenure, etc.,- are there university-based rules, or is it all department-based?
		2. Max K. (Poly Sci): What is the goal or target of the diversity initiative? Is it supposed to represent the American population? Something between the American population and the global population? What’s the reference we are shooting for?
		3. Joe (Pub Health): What is the indicator of success/ the end goal? What are the intermediate checkpoints going to be to make sure they’re on track? Will diversity only be made up for in adjunct/ lecture positions, or for actual tenure track positions too?
		4. Andrey (Comp Lit): Concerns that Dean Cooley and Dean Nearon said they don’t understand why this ends up being racist, because the system is fair. What’s the difference between the very successful and fair system now and the very successful and fair system that we’re looking towards? How to effectively word this without making them feel like they’re liable for what they’re stating?
		5. Joe (Pub Health): Are there evidence-based protocols from other universities that can be used in this approach, or is it going to be more of a “something is not right, we have to try harder.” Katie commented that universities don’t have this information, but Fortune 500 companies have this. Wendy commented that Stanford implemented some changes that helped increase the proportion of women faculty.
		6. Janna (Religious Studies): Is the university prepared to incentivize departments to have them follow the standards that are put in place?
		7. Fabian (Economics): What is the university doing regarding the pipeline issue?
		8. Christopher (Linguistics): Will 50 million be used to just hire adjuncts or actual tenure-track?
		9. Bryan: (FES): What is the long term future and the guiding principles for hiring for diversity?
		10. Andrey (Comp Lit): How is work by these professors to help pipeline issues being compensated? Is there a system that can be implemented to register that time put in?
		11. Liz said she is planning on having an overview at the general assembly meeting after the forum if we are unable to make it.
		12. Sarah (Chemistry): Are there any checkpoints after you get tenure implemented at Yale? Maybe these people who aren’t doing a good job could be replaced with a more diverse addition to the faculty? This is a concern that needs to be brought up.
		13. Wendy (MD/PhD) cited study regarding women being marked unfairly by both men and women- are they going to blind the applicants at some level, or how can they correct for it?
		14. Christopher (Linguistics): Particularly regarding retention: Faculty losses through departure and tenure denial- lots of these people have been central to their departments, mentors, etc. Wendy (MD/PhD) commented that mentoring time can take away from writing grants, etc.
		15. Consuelo (Poly Sci): Women and men are judged differently in recommendation letters. Systemic problem, but awareness of this might help.
		16. Joe (Pub Health): oSTEM group for gays in STEM and they realized there are no gay professors to ask to help head this program. Joe recognizes this is not typically a group recognized for diversity, but gays in science are not common—sexual diversity is important too
		17. Mate (CB&B) asked whether there is any knowledge about diversity criteria in departments. Liz said she thinks most departments have requirement for at least one woman, but Mate said maybe committees should be more aligned with what is envisioned for the departments.

1. Tax Facts Discussion
	1. Event held on Thursday January 21, HGS 119, 8-9PM. Local accountant to discuss how to do taxes (very generally!) as a graduate student. No individual advice will be given. Joey (Astronomy) has received some questions people have and those have been sent to the accountant. For example, is health award taxable? First year concerns—they have not been PhD students for the whole year and may have additional sources of income—how do they deal with this?
	2. Max (Poly Sci): Will PowerPoint be available for people who cannot attend. Joey is not sure. Max also wanted to know about international student help—OISS is the best resource for this
	3. Can we have Ask-an-Accountant like Ask-a-Lawyer? Liz said that the reason we can get the lawyers is because of lawyer pro bono work. Joey also talked about liability on the part of accountants, which might prevent this from happening.
	4. Specific questions for accountant?
		1. Andrew (Genetics): We need to go beyond what they usually say, which is that we have to pay taxes. Discuss more along the lines of if your income is coming in this column, this is the form you need, etc. Wendy (MD/PhD) suggested giving a list of issues that come up often.
		2. Janna (Religious Studies): Confusion between teaching fellowship and stipend—did not use graduate student friendly language to explain this last year, which was very confusing for attending students.
		3. Wendy (MD/PhD): Can we say we are self-employed because we get a stipend instead of a wage and does that make a difference?—some discussion about whether this is a cheaper or more expensive option.
		4. Consuelo (Poly Sci): is there a forum where people can go that has lots of questions and answers online?
		5. Wendy (MD/ PhD) said the IRS is trying to get a law passed where taxes are filed automatically every year, but TurboTax is lobbying hard to make sure this does not happen.
	5. Sarah (Chemistry): is the meeting going to be recorded? Recording this could be effective. Slides might not help at all. Liz wants to know whether a typed up list of questions and answers could be provided? Katie thinks we should check with accountant, and Joey said he will take notes regardless.
	6. Liz: would it be worthwhile to ask about tax withholding at Yale, or did we get enough information from Jennifer Brinley. Mate (CB&B) said he thinks we’ve had enough information from her, and no one objected.
	7. Liz: Is there confusion about federal vs. state taxes? No.
	8. Andrew (Film Studies): Not claiming CT residence—is there a penalty for paying in both states? What is going on with this? Is claiming CT residence or claiming other state better for taxes?
	9. Joey (Astronomy): Does anyone want to set up? Be there half an hour before the event!
2. Concerns from the Floor
	1. Liz
		1. Tax facts tomorrow, Thursday, January 21 at 8 PM in HGS 119
		2. Building a Diverse Faculty: Recruitment, Tenure, and Retention. Tuesday, January 26 from 6 to 8 PM in Luce Hall.
		3. Rescheduled with Michelle Nearon- unable to attend last semester general assembly meeting because she was sick. Dhe will be at general assembly meeting March 9
	2. Consuelo (Poly Sci): Ask a lawyer on Monday January 25
	3. Mate (CB&B): Newsletter header changed to avoid formatting issues- please let us know if it does not work out well and whether there are still formatting issues
	4. Liz: sign up for department meeting if you have not already.
3. Adjournment
	1. Motion to adjourn seconded. Meeting ended at 7:49 PM.

**Parliamentary Procedure Basics Reviewed**

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| **Type** | **Purpose** | **To Enact Motion** |
| Main Motion“I move that…” | To take action on behalf of the body | Second needed. Debatable. Requires majority vote. |

**Privileged Motions**

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| **Type** | **Purpose** | **To Enact Motion** |
| Call for orders of the DayChair asks if there are any objections to the agenda. | Asks Assembly to stick to the agenda | Not debatable; approved unless there is an objection, requires 1/3 to sustain. |
| Adjourn“I move to adjourn” | End of meeting | Second needed. Not debatable. Not amendable. Meeting closes unless there is an objection, otherwise immediately voted upon and requires majority vote. |

**Subsidiary Motions**

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| **Type** | **Purpose** | **To Enact Motion** |
| Table Current Business“I move to table the current business…” – Indefinitely or a set amount of time. | To lay one matter aside temporarily so that a more urgent matter can be considered. | Second needed. Not debatable. Not amendable. Requires majority vote. |
| Call the Question“I move the previous question” “I call the question” | Closes debate and forces vote. | Second needed. Not debatable. Not amendable. Requires 2/3 vote. |
| Motion to Limit or Extend Debate“I move that debate be limited to (or end at)…” | Limits or extends debate. | Second needed. Not debatable. Not amendable. Requires 2/3 vote. |
| Motion to refer“I move that we refer the question of…to…(name of group) for…(further study) | Another group considers the motion and may change or modify the motion and then present it to the assembly. | Second needed. Debatable. Amendable. Requires majority vote. |
| Amendments“I move to amend the motion by…” | Used to change a motion. Change must be related to the subject of the motion. | Second needed. Debatable. Amendable. Requires majority vote. |

**Incidental Motions**

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| **Type** | **Purpose** | **To Enact Motion** |
| Point of order“Point of order” | A question about the process or a particular motion. Typically to call attention to a mistake in parliamentary procedure or a question of Scope based on the Charter and Bylaws. | The member addresses the Chair. She/he need not be recognized before speaking, She/he may interrupt a speaker who has the floor. Automatic if granted by the Chair. No second needed. Not debatable. Not amendable. No vote. |
| Point of information“Point of information” | To ask about the particular motion | Automatic |
| Parliamentary Inquiry“Parliamentary Inquiry” | To ask about the particular process | Automatic |