

GSA General Assembly Meeting

Wednesday, September 4th, 2013

Start Time: 7:40

1. Approval of the Minutes (no minutes)
2. Approval of the Agenda – Approved
3. Welcome and introduction of officers
 - a. Overview of the Assembly (Brian Dunican)
 - i. Introduces officers.
 - ii. Overview of role and goals of GSA including asking GSA Representatives to identify and propose solutions for issues concerned graduate students. Using example of Mental Health Committee and their work to create a Report with GPSS. Moving to specifics about committees.
 - b. Introduction of the Committees
 - i. Academics and Professional Development (Caitlin Verboon)
 1. Focus on teaching, mentoring, professional development and the libraries. Standing projects including fellowship database, the process of moving into and out of teaching years, and 6th year funding. Most of our experiences is that most get their 6th year teaching so pushing for that despite the fact that most people get it.
 2. Looking at issues including online teaching, reviews of TF program and other issues like that. From our Committee we vote 4 outside advocacy positions – delegate to University Library Committee, Teaching Center/ Graduate Career Services and ODEO advocate. You can join more than one committee. First meeting will be next Wednesday at 7pm in the HGS Common Room. ANY questions, please let her know.
 - ii. Facilities and healthcare (Michelle Kriner)
 1. Centered on space around the university and the health plan.
 2. Last year we focused on Legal Aid with New Haven Bar Association Lawyers and created a list of lawyers with the dean. We worked on graduate concerns with gym and tonight will vote on a proposal for extended gym hours. We actively proposed a committee for Housing university-wide. Also looking at Westville and have a member on the HGS Renovation Committee.

3. Dental has seen major improvements including 80% coverage of fillings. Looking at ideas such as tax advice sessions, information about housing and access to 24/7 study space. Email anytime. The meetings will be after the general assembly meetings.

iii. Transit and Security (Sachi Inukai)

1. We work on all aspects of transportation and safety. We meet regularly with administrators including safety and Yale policy. Past projects the Yale Bike Plan and Intersection Safety Report. We are also working on transit with the transit office to improve shuttle routes. For example, we increased weekend shuttle to ½ hour over 1 hour service. Working on street lighting, blue lights/phones, etc.. Also working on laboratory safety and looking at research materials transport and after hour laboratory safety. Meeting will be every other week (not general assembly meeting week) on Wednesdays at 7:30 at Bass.

iv. Publicity (Julie Lanselle)

1. Faustin gives description. We've added a GSA Logo and an art director Justine. We work with the Yale Daily News and should know about a GSA story or initiative. We want to tell graduate students what is going on. Interested in writing articles, photoshop and photography please join. Also looking at collaborating on the website with Bill. Meeting times TBD.

v. Conference Travel Fellowship (Brian Vlastakis)

1. We give out 60,000 to graduate students for conference travel. CTF gets together 4 times a year to look over applications and to determine funding. We will be asking for volunteers then. It will be 6 people. Question: Can you apply if on GSA? Yes if not a reader that cycle.

c. Role of a GSA Representative (Brian Dunican)

- i. Attendance at General Body meetings is required. If you miss three consecutive meetings, you will be dismissed. You can be reimplemented by meeting with the Steering Committee.
- ii. A major aspect of our outreach is our department meeting.

d. Departmental Meetings (Joori Park)

- i. Please hold a department meeting. It is a great way to interact with the student body. It is an avenue to identify problems and to identify solutions. For example, we are looking into offering tax support based on the feedback. Each representative will be given \$75 to have a meeting. To do it, email Joori. She will send all the information and information about using the P-Card (procurement card, basically a Yale credit card) and how to document the purchase. She will also send a cheat sheet with past and current projects.

Afterwards, we will have a questionnaire on Qualtrics for you to fill out and then give an abridged version to the GSA. Please make sure to tailor it to your department. This Qualtrics database is for the other side. So each committee will submit questions and this will be helpful information for the committees. You can spend your money as you want.

- ii. Question about example? Uses Legal Aid and issue of department space.
- e. Parliamentary Procedure, Bylaws and Charter (Faustin Carter)
 - i. Looking at Roberts Rules and going through the cheat sheet on the back of the agenda.
- 4. Report from Summer Steering (Brian Dunican)
 - a. During the summer the GSA has a Summer Steering meeting and much of what we did we will be talking about it shortly. Thank you to those who worked on the Compass and at Orientation. We passed out mugs, glasses and the Compass (all gone!). The ice cream is left over from an Orientation event.
 - b. Grad Station – online student center; updated to department meeting lists; working on legal aid; putting together seminar on landlord/tenant issues at the end of September; fall elections for GSA; other things show up in agenda below at new business. Vice Chair is de-facto chair of the election committee.
- 5. New Business
 - a. Approval of the Budget (Joori Park)
 - i. Joori presents budget. We are looking to increase the representative departmental meetings to \$100/representative. We will have to see if we are approved for it.
 - ii. Questions about the money per department? Concerns it is not enough. So we will present it next week at Steering.
 - iii. Why is the BBQ from last year on this one? Invoice hit this year.
 - iv. Voting- Yes. 91% yes, 2% No, 7% Abstain - Passes
 - v. Request for funds for Yale Day of Service
 - b. Approval of Common Grounds (Joori Park)
 - i. Call to add West Campus. Questions about why \$8 (because of cost of coffee). Question about emailing the voucher? We give them an expiration date. People aren't taking them. Questions about how many people use it? About 100 requested last year.

- ii. The problem with email is you can replicate it. You'd have to put a lot of trouble in to replicate.
 - iii. Move to amend the resolution to add West Campus Dining. It is seconded. Discussion or questions? None. By voice – passes.
 - iv. Joori will make sure we can add West Campus.
 - v. Move to call to question? Yes. All in favor? ... Motion passes unanimously.
- c. Gym Proposal (Michelle Kriner)
- i. Passes- Unanimously
- d. Mental Health Committee Report (Ariana Chao)
- i. Ariana overviews the report. Importance to vote tonight because of meeting with Dr. Siggins in a week and half.
 - ii. Add statistics to reference the GSA Survey and the fact that Yale is a leader in the field. We need to make a reference to the outside review that stated this.
 - iii. Marie- Amelie’s list of issues.
 1. 1. At one point, the report states that it can take over a month to be assigned to a doctor during peak times. This understates the extent of the problem: it regularly takes three to four months to be seen for the first time after intake. Mental Health and Counseling (MHC) should be required to assign a physician to treat a student within one week of the intake, and the first appointment should be held within a week of the assignment. If this is unworkable, MHC should be required to keep track of the amount of time between initial contact, intake, assignment, and first appointment, and prepare a plan to reduce the length of time between each of these. The current delay is unacceptable.
 2. The report does not address MHC's system for reassigning students who are unhappy with their treatment provider. Currently, a student must ask the person to whom s/he is assigned for a reassignment, and must continue to work with the same treatment provider until the reassignment is made, which can take several months. Students should be able to request reassignments from the head of MHC, without going through their current provider, and the reassignment time should be much shorter.
 3. MHC only provides short term care, and the Yale Health Plan does not provide any coverage for long term care. Students should have access to ongoing mental health counseling, rather than being limited to one semester of therapy. MHC also does not treat cognitive disorders, and the Yale Health Plan does not otherwise cover treatment for cognitive disorders.

4. The report understates the role the University can play in reducing the stress that graduate students experience. Much of this comes from pressure due to departmental requirements (for example, oral exams). Departments should be encouraged to review their requirements and restructure them in order to reduce student stress (for example, by allowing students to spread out their oral exams, instead of taking all of them at once). The job market is also a significant stressor. While the graduate school has taken great steps to making students aware of alternatives to academia, this has not transferred to the departments themselves. For example, the history department changed its oral exam requirements last year to include developing class syllabi, on the assumption that all students would seek academic jobs. The department could have alternative assignments for those interested in public humanities or other career options.

5. In discussing the use of technology, the report downplays the question of confidentiality. It should be clear that any notes taken by mental health services providers should not be electronic or accessible to anyone other than the direct provider.

Before revising the report, I would recommend that the ad hoc committee set up a series of open fora on concerns with mental health services at Yale, to understand the wider range of student issues than are currently contained in the report. It should also send a questionnaire that includes open-ended questions, rather than the very specific and limited survey that the GSA circulated last year.

2. Question? What happens if we don't pass it. GPSS will present it without GSA. What you see now it a minimum. If we approve, it will be ok for the Member Advisory Committee.
3. So if we don't pass this today and then next time, just GPSS will do it?
Yes
4. Calls for the language to be stronger.
5. Voting on amendment to include feedback from after the meeting. Call to question – Passes unanimously.
6. Call to question on the resolution. Concerns about such a quick turn around. Approved this quick turn around because of its importance.
7. Feedback to Ariana is welcome. Please stay after if want to give feedback. Will vote on final version in two weeks.
8. Feedback:
 - a. Add to the recommendations a point on campus culture stressing responsibility of the university to institute a positive

culture of mental health, including actively seeking to destigmatize mental health concerns and academic departments to promote and facilitate a culture of mental wellness.

6. Elections and Appointments

a. GSA Committees

i. Steering Committee

1. Science 2 – done (4 scientists on it right now)
2. Social Science -
3. Humanities -
4. 4 other -

ii. Publicity Chair – Nominations

iii. Elections Committee – Table

iv. Amendment is to table to next week. Passes.

b. GSAS Committees

i. Executive Committee

1. Sciences - Melanie Kaelberer (Cellular and Molecular Physiology)
2. Humanities - Elizabeth (NELC)
3. Social Sciences - Shayna Lieberman (Anthro)
4. Voting – Passes Unanimously

ii. Dean's Advisory Committee on Regulations Discipline

1. Science – Michael Kanik (Engineering and Applied Science)
2. Alternate – Jacob Blumoff (Physics), Xue Sun (Neuroscience)
3. Humanities – Katherine Hindley (Medival)
4. Social Sciences – Consuelo Matus (PoliSci)
5. Called to Question – Passes unanimously

iii. Dean's Advisory Committee on Student Grievances

1. Science – Beatrice Bowen (Genetics)
2. Social Science – Joshua Braver (Political Science)

3. Alternate - Amy Mount (International Relations)
4. Humanities – Kyle Skinner (Italian)
5. Passes unanimously

7. Concerns from the Floor / Announcements - None

8. Internal Committee Sign-Up