

# GSA General Assembly Meeting

Wednesday, September 18, 2013

1. Approval of the Agenda
  - a. Approved without changes.
  
2. Reports
  - a. Steering Committee (Brian Dunican)
    - i. The Steering Committee had its first chat with Dean Pollard last week. It went very well. The committee members updated him on what we'd been doing over the summer (which had been presented to GSA at the last assembly meeting).
    - ii. We asked for and received a 20% increase in our total operating budget, so now every representative will receive \$100 for their departmental meetings.
    - iii. We also spoke briefly about Prescription Plus Specialty Coverage. Previously, graduate students had to opt out of additional medication costs. Because of changes to the healthcare law, this is now required part of the plan, and the Grad School picked up the cost. When it comes up in discussion with your departments, please let them know the Graduate School did this for us.
  - b. Academics and Professional Development (Caitlin Verboon)
    - i. The committee met last Wednesday and talked about things done last year.
    - ii. The committee has not yet elected the outside positions so please sign up.
    - iii. Caitlin will be sending out a Doodle to find a new time for the meetings.
  - c. Facilities and Healthcare (Michelle Kriner)
    - i. The committee's first meeting will be directly after the GSA meeting, in the HGS Common Room.
  - d. Transit and Security (Bill Ruff)
    - i. Bill stood in for Sachi (committee chair), as Sachi was sick.
    - ii. The committee is trying to get more involved in how Yale implements policies.
    - iii. There are not currently a lot of people signed up for the committee, and they could really use more members.
    - iv. The committee will meet briefly tonight to figure out when the first actual meeting will be, but there is no official time yet. The meeting time was planned to be every other (non-GSA meeting) Wednesdays but had to be changed.
  
3. Old Business
  - a. Steering Committee Elections
    - i. First, Brian explains the purpose of the committee.
      1. The Steering Committee sets the agenda for meetings of the Assembly and facilitates contact between the Assembly and Dean Pollard.
      2. Being on Steering is honestly a lot of fun, is very interesting, and provides a lot of insight into how the Graduate School and University work.
      3. There are divisional requirements: 2 from each division; we already have the Science members due to the GSA executive board being on

Steering. We need to elect least two members from Social Sciences, at least two members from Humanities, and two from any of the above.

4. Also, members must be available on Tuesdays at 4pm.

ii. Nominations:

1. Kyle Skinner (Italian) – Accepts
2. Lauren Tilton (American Studies) – Accepts
3. Elizabeth Lang (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) – Accepts
4. Saad Ansari (International Relations) – Accepts
5. Ariana Chao (Nursing) – Declines
6. Lesley Park (Public Health) – Declines
7. Joshua Braver (Political Science) – Declines
8. Andrew Kirwin (Germanic Languages and Literature) – Declines
9. Amy Mount – Not present

iii. Candidate Speeches

1. Brian moves vote on the four people who accepted nominations, and postpone the later two until next meeting. If everyone nominated was elected, this would leave open one social scientist position and one flexible position.
2. Kyle Skinner
  - a. Kyle mentions that he has many interesting ideas about education, and that he loves America and other countries.
3. Lauren Tilton
  - a. Lauren says she loves America more than Kyle does. She is a former chair of the GSA, so she has a lot of institutional memory and can be generally of assistance. She also cares a great deal about sixth-year funding.
4. Elizabeth Lang
  - a. Elizabeth says she can't really compete with Kyle or Lauren, since she's Canadian. However, she really loves Egypt. This is her second year in the GSA.
5. Saad Ansari
  - a. Saad makes a joke about international relations. He really supports international education at Yale as well as global education, and he is concerned with rankings at Yale.

iv. Election Results

1. Each candidate is voted on individually.
2. All four nominees are elected to Steering (majority carries).

b. Publicity Chair Election

i. Nominations

1. Justine Walden (Renaissance Studies) – Accepts
2. Shayna Liberman (Anthropology) – Accepts

ii. Candidate Speeches

1. Justine Walden

- a. Justine was involved in the Publicity Committee last year, and was a graphic designer and creative director before coming back to school. She says that Publicity is going to be a fun committee and invites everyone to join it and vote for her. She plans on raising brand awareness and getting the word out about the GSA, as well as helping with the website and similar things.
            - i. Faustin asks Justine if she can handle the time commitment; she replies that she thinks so.
        - 2. Shayna Liberman
          - a. Shayna says that she feels the efficacy of the GSA is really impacted by our ability to reach out to students. She is a typographer, has done graphic design work, and has overhauled 6 websites in the past year. She'd very much like to have the opportunity to help the GSA.
            - i. Faustin asks Shayna if she can handle the time commitment; she says she's absolutely prepared.
        - iii. Election Results
          - 1. Justine is elected as Publicity Chair.
      - c. Elections Committee (Faustin Carter)
        - i. Faustin asks for one member from each division, and up to three additional members.
        - ii. Nominations
          - 1. Caitlin Verboon (History)
          - 2. Shayna Liberman (Anthropology)
          - 3. Chad Marion (Investigative Medicine)
        - iii. Elections
          - 1. All are approved by acclamation.
  - 4. Mental Health Committee Report (Paul Baranay)
    - a. NB: This section of the minutes was transcribed by Faustin Carter, as Paul was presenting the report.
    - b. Report Presentation
      - i. Paul provided background on the committee's creation and the resolution that asked for the report. The report was supposed to be done by Spring 2013, but the committee's meeting with the Member Advisory Committee (MAC) was pushed back, so the committee asked for more time to make the report better, which last year's assembly approved.
      - ii. The committee presented the report to the MAC on Friday, September 13. The reception was warm and grateful.
      - iii. Last year, there was an external audit of the Mental Health and Counseling department. Although the committee wasn't given access to the report, they were told the report was very positive.
      - iv. Paul addressed some specific revisions since the last meeting:

1. The committee tried to be as strong as possible without frustrating anyone. Representatives who voiced concerns at the last meeting say they are happy with the changes.
  2. Tightened up language in the confidentiality section and added an additional reference to HIPAA.
  3. Some folks wanted the report to address departmental issues and sources of stress. The committee decided not to because they wanted to address the issue from an institutional perspective.
- c. Questions from the Floor
- i. Colton Lynner: Was this already presented [to the MAC]?
    1. Paul: Yes.
  - ii. Colton[?]: Once submitted will GPSS just vote yes regardless of what we do?
    1. Paul: Yes.
  - iii. Paul mentioned that he wants to put out another report soon if there is no change within the department.
  - iv. Lauren Tilton: The GPSS liked the changes.
  - v. Someone else was happy with the added statistics from the GSA survey.
  - vi. Lauren wanted to point out a few other things from the MAC meeting, which she also attended:
    1. Dr. Siggins (chief of Mental Health was very receptive with our recommendations and agreed with them all, and she augmented our arguments to MHC.
    2. Second, we made a pitch to the MAC that more money need to be put to MHC; union members and professional faculty, and in principle at least they agree this should be a funding priority.
    3. Third, Dr. Siggins agreed to meet with us again to follow up, as do the publicity people from the Yale Health Plan.
- d. Voting
- i. Report approved: 86.7% approve, 13.3% abstain, none no.
5. Concerns from the floor / Announcements
- a. Gift to Lauren Tilton
    - i. Lauren is presented with a ceremonial gavel by Brian and the other officers, to thank her for her work as GSA Chair last year.
  - b. Ask-a-Lawyer Program (Faustin Carter)
    - i. The first Ask-a-Lawyer session is happening this Monday; it's a workshop on Landlord Tenant Law. Faustin passes out fliers for representatives to put up in your department. Our eventual goal is to hand this off to the University and make it a University priority.
    - ii. Faustin asks for one or two volunteers to help with this as well. Consuelo Amat Matus and Shayna Liberman volunteer.
6. Adjournment