

Graduate Student Association
Northwestern University
Officer Transition Meeting
26 August 2009

Present

Outgoing Officers:

Harold Hsiung, President
Luciana Zanella, Secretary
Chris George, Treasurer

Incoming Officers:

Patrick Ryan, President
Louise Edwards, Secretary
Eric Berns, Treasurer
Roxanne Atienza, Advocacy Chair
Kate Newbold, Social Chair
Sara Armstrong, Communications Officer
Alex Spokoynyy, Operations Chair

Action Items

Patrick

- Email officers about availability for bimonthly meetings on Monday mornings.
- Confirm time and volunteers for GSA table at International Graduate Student Orientation on September 8 and Graduate Student Orientation on September 14.

Patrick and Eric

- Attend SOFO training when dates have been finalized.

Sara

- Confirm that new graduate students have been added to the GSA listserv.

Louise

- Request key for GSA locker.

Everyone

- Review minutes and notes from our last meeting and come to our next meeting prepared to discuss events for this fall and ideas for a Community Building Grant proposal.
- **The next meeting for GSA officers is Tuesday, September 8, from 11:45 AM -12:45 PM in the food court at Norris.**

Agenda

1. Upcoming Meetings and Events

- Officer Meetings for the GSA will be held bimonthly throughout the academic year. Meetings will occur every two weeks on a regularly scheduled date and time TBD. Meetings will last for one hour and will be held in the food court at Norris. Patrick will email the officers about their availability for regular meetings on Monday mornings.
- The GSA will hold the fall general meeting sometime the week of October 5, 2009. Patrick will check the availability of the other officers before finalizing the date, time, and location.

- The GSA will have a table at the resource fair for international graduate students on Tuesday, September 8, from 1:00-5:30 PM. Patrick will confirm the time and duration and will coordinate volunteers to man the table.
- The GSA will have a table at the resource fair for graduate students on Monday, September 14, from 1:00-3:30 PM. Patrick and Louise will work the table. Patrick may ask for additional volunteers.

2. Treasury

- Harold and Chris reminded Patrick and Eric that as the President and Treasurer of GSA they need to attend training held by the Student Organizations Finance Office (SOFO). The date has not been set for the next training. More information about SOFO can be found online: <http://www.norris.northwestern.edu/sofo.php>.
- The GSA sponsored a financial seminar about "How to Get Started Investing" on Thursday, August 20, 2009 from 5:30-6:30 PM. Chris reported that approximately 60 graduate students attended the seminar, double the number from last year.
- The GSA will host one financial seminar each quarter. Other ideas for future seminars include: 1) managing credit cards and building credit; 2) negotiating job offers (winter quarter); 3) another tax seminar funded jointly with Ruth's community building grant.
- The budget currently has \$4,700 remaining from the last academic year. Eric is requesting \$4,850 for the upcoming academic year (which presumably will not be in addition to our remainder from last year).
- The deadline for applications for the Community Building Grant has been extended for graduate student associations to October 15, 2009. Kate might apply for funding for a specific event like a boat cruise. Ideally, the event or project will bring together graduate students from different departments and schools. Additional information and guidelines for submission can be found online: <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentlife/commbuildingproposals/>.

3. Operations

- Harold will give Alex the information so that Alex can update the GSA website. Officers should email Alex with any updates for the GSA website.
- GSA also has a Facebook page and Google calendar. Both need to be updated and should be linked to the GSA website.

4. Social

- Ideas for the upcoming year include:
 - co-sponsorship of the quarterly TGS night out with publicity and volunteers
 - cooking class, depending on interest, cost, and availability
 - happy hour with a local bar
 - Kate needs to check with TGS about the alcohol policy. This could be done in conjunction with Monday night football.
 - a "family friendly" event for graduate students and their partners and/or children
 - graduate student research symposium or colloquium
 - This idea was considered with TGS and the Center for Civic Engagement last year, but never happened. See under service for related ideas.
 - social event for parents and children about opportunities for child care

- Roxy and Sara were both interested in working on this with Kate. The location should be family friendly. Roxy suggested graduate student housing at Englehart Hall as a possible location.
- Ideas for the fall quarter include:
 - GSA team for IM sports like football and/or dodge ball depending on numbers and interest; last year those who expressed interest were linked up with other teams.
 - tailgate party and tickets to a Northwestern football game
 - This would be better if it happened earlier in the fall (nicer weather) and if it involved an additional discount on tickets (tickets for graduate students cost \$20 or \$30 depending on the game).
 - Bears tickets, depending on interest, cost, and availability
- Ideas for the spring quarter include:
 - 5K run
 - BBQ with TGS

5. Service

- The GSA does not have a Service Chair for the upcoming year. Patrick will advertise the position at the general meeting in October, and Sara will follow this with an announcement through the GSA listserv.
- Continuing opportunities for service work include:
 - Cradle (adoption agency) needs volunteers for its annual fundraiser
 - Women's Club of Evanston needs volunteers for its Halloween event
 - Promotion of the blood drives on campus each quarter
 - Mather Pavilion for the elderly invites graduate students to give a presentation on their work to its residents.
- Other ideas for service opportunities include:
 - partnering with NCDC, the undergraduate student service organization at Northwestern
 - partnering with the Center for Civic Engagement at Northwestern – contact Simon Greenwold, Senior Associate Dean for TGS, for ideas
 - partnering with the Women's Center and providing volunteers for "Take Our Daughters to Work Day" in the spring of 2010 – Paul Thelen organized a tour and volunteers for his program last year
 - working with Meaningful Science Consortium – Patrick served as a substitute teacher for a high school science class so that the teacher could participate in other workshops
 - mentoring high school students or undergraduates who may be interested in pursuing a Ph.D. – this could be coordinated with the Center for Civic Engagement at Northwestern and/or could be organized as a consortium/symposium

6. Communications

- Sara will follow up with Bill (or his counterpart) to ensure that new graduate students are added to the GSA listserv.
- Sara will send an email after the GSA officer meeting on September 8 with information about the general meeting in October and upcoming events.

7. Advocacy

- U-Pass

- Announcement from TGS in April 2009: "As a result of this price increase being imposed by the CTA and on recommendation of the Graduate Leadership Council to expand U-PASS coverage from 323 days per year to a full 365 days per year, the quarterly cost of the activity fee will increase to \$78 for all full-time eligible graduate students beginning September 2009. To be clear, \$74 will fund the U-PASS and the remaining \$4 will continue to contribute to the expenses for an attorney and community building activities for all graduate students." Harold believes this is a 5 year contract and that changes are unlikely. Questions about the U-Pass should still be included on the GLC's graduate student survey.
- Health
 - Roxy will serve as the GSA representative to the Health Advisory Committee. She will follow up on the status regarding the continued operation of the pharmacy at Health Services.
 - GSA could host a seminar with an Aetna representative about dependent health insurance coverage and resources. This would be separate from a social event about child care opportunities for graduate students.
- Bill of Rights
 - Harold, Theo, and Paul worked on a draft of this last spring. Harold encouraged us to seek additional volunteers to work on the various advocacy issues with Roxanne.
- Stu's View
 - Harold reported that the website is being revamped. Roxy shared that the apartment rating service for undergraduates was more helpful.
- Intercampus Shuttle
 - Additional stops were added last year. Additional service will be added starting this fall for the AM and PM rush hours.
 - Expanded weekend service caters mostly to undergraduates. Graduate students working between the Evanston and Chicago campuses might benefit from expanded service on the weekends, including more runs on Saturday and service on Sunday.
- Career Services
 - Currently, Career Services provides support predominantly for graduate students seeking employment within academia. Additional information and resources for students seeking employment elsewhere might be beneficial. We might also partner with Chaoming Yin on her "Career Peers" project.
- GLC Survey
 - Patrick will circulate a draft of the survey questions to GSA officers for our feedback.