

Graduate Student Senate
Friday, November 20th, 2020
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Zoom

Notes

Quote: *“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”* -Audre Lorde

Ice-Breaker: Popcorn Gratitudes

In attendance:

Dewin Hernandez, Director of GSA
Sonia Kwak Director of Finance
Marquise Griffin Director of Programming
Shannon Murphy STM and GA for Multifaith Programs
Liz Vossen OGSL
Kelly Sankowski STM
Illse Bellido-Richards GISA
Lisa Chen GSCA
Rebecca Brigham GNA
Eva Butten Social Work Collective
Christina Vlahos GEA
Kelsey Koswick GMA

Updates from GSA and OGSL

Director of Finance

Sonia shared that she’s been communicating with all the grad student organizations to get their paperwork completed. She also mentioned that she needs the name, Eagle ID numbers, and email addresses of all of the attendees for events with food and for recipients of prizes and any gift cards.

Next, Sonia mentioned she has received all the P-Card reconciliations for October and reminded the Senate that the P-Card reconciliations deadline for November is approaching.

Then, Sonia announced that the GSA was able to provide professional development grants for most of the applicants, especially due to greater flexibility with the budget this year. She also mentioned that there may not have been as many conferences or and that costs have been lower, resulting in fewer students needing financial assistance.

Finally, Sonia declared the GSA will have the same application for the spring semester and that we are planning to have larger events to spend money towards.

Director of Programming

Marquise shared with the Senate that the Fireside chats are available online through Vimeo and will later be put on YouTube. He believes that while there has not been a live audience attending, there is the potential for sharing the event to a wider audience and preserving them for posterity.

Marquise also mentioned that the GSA is hosting a virtual Thanksgiving Dinner on Wednesday November 23rd from 7pm-8pm. Each participant will receive dinner that they can either pick up directly from their chosen restaurant or have delivered to them.

Next, Marquise announced that the first ten registrants for the December 4th Fireside Chat will receive a \$25 Starbucks gift card, as part of providing an incentive to increase event attendance. Depending on the success of incentivizing events, Marquise plans to continue offering participants packages moving forward.

Finally, Marquise mentioned that some of the larger events the GSA is planning includes monthly speakers, trivia and game nights, and depending on the University's policies for covid, limited in-person events in open spaces.

Director of GSA

Dewin began his update by mentioning that communication is changing, most notably, the OGSL newsletter is released weekly instead of biweekly. Dewin encouraged the Senate to sign up to the Slack channel to increase communication between members. He also wants to set up 1-on-1 meetings with each grad student leader for about 15 mins.

Next Dewin shared that the Provost Advisory Council is continuing discussions about better supporting graduate students during covid, including more testing and ways to protect against contracting the virus.

Dewin also announced the GSA will have Strategic Planning meetings starting today, after the Senate meeting and he is looking for two senators to join. Dewin would like us to discuss ways to pool resources for greater impact and more engagement among graduate students.

Finally, Dewin shared his screen to the Senate to briefly walk everyone through Engage. He mentioned the information is uploaded on the GSA website. There is a form linked to engage for students to fill out and to give comments to the senate. Dewin's goal is using Engage will be helpful for gaining more attendance and keeping records of events.

Senator Updates

GMA

Kelsey shared the GMA has been focusing on providing events that are unique to the digital space and have been working on bringing in speakers.

Next she announced a holiday/Christmas drive starting soon. The GMA has just completed a networking series for first year students regarding internships and other extracurricular activities.

Finally Kelsey mentioned the GMA is trying to come up with ideas for more engagement to get more GMA students involved.

GEA

Christina shared the GEA is planning for events such as Murder Mystery, a cooking event, and more. She mentioned her group has been creative for social events, and building the group's social circle by offering gift cards/prizes as incentives to get people involved. They are trying to increase the social game and doing events just through social (costume contests that people voted for, ugly sweater contests). In order to vote, participants needed to follow the GEA on social media.

GISA

Illse shared GISA is trying to create a new executive board. GISA held an information session for the e-board and 8 people attended. The participants asked several questions, including a question about the support position of the stipends and if there are opportunities to add one or more positions that can receive stipends. The participants also asked about collaborations and how effective it could be.

Next, she related that similar to the other groups, GISA is struggling with event attendance. But she mentioned that they had a trivia night with decent attendance and gave gift cards for the winners.

Finally, Illse wondered if having a GISA Newsletter would be effective and if they can get outside help for that.

STM

Kelly announced STM held a virtual symposium where students presented papers, and similar to Marquise, they are planning a virtual friendsgiving.

Next Kelly mentioned STM is continuing to advocate for faculty to include a quarantine policy into their syllabi and would like to see examples of the language used by other syllabi.

Shannon, also representing STM and a graduate assistant for Multifaith Programs, mentioned she has been observing a lot of resilience among the different groups in how they've been adapting their meetings and events for a virtual format.

GSCA

Lisa shared the GSCA, similar to the other groups, have been having events but with small turnout. So far they have been seeing similar people, pointing to good retention, despite the small attendance. Similar to GISA, the GSCA is also considering creating a newsletter to more effectively impart information.

And the GSCA are thinking about recruiting more e-board members and especially first-years so that they don't have to be trained.

Finally, Lisa shared they recently got GSCA gear and are planning a care package to give people for the finals season. They want to make sure that people feel supported overall.

GNA

Rebecca shared that the GNA is trying to figure out how they can utilize funds in the covid environment.

She mentioned the leadership met with the Nursing School faculty to consider giving out care packages to new students at the beginning of the semester and for career-building opportunities.

Finally, Rebecca mentioned that nursing students have had a few problems with clinicals because of COVID and that the GNA is working on more projects for the next semester.

Identify Agenda items for Next Senate Meeting: Friday, 12/18/20 at 1:00PM

Communication strategy

Collaboration for future events