Graduate Student Association
Senate Meeting Agenda
November 10, 2017

Senators in Attendance

Jasmine Hamm (GSA)
Megan Ottati (GSA)
Peter Lee (GSA)
Katie Baker (GEA)
Osato Egonmwan (GSCA)
Christopher Berger (GASA)
Jon McCallie (GMA)
Andrew Timmons (GPA)
Marcus Smith (SSW Collective)
Laura McCormack (STM Forum)
Lauren Eichmann (GNA)

Observers in Attendance

Victoria Gabriele (BCGEU-UAW)
Nathan Nesbitt (BCGEU-UAW)
Bryn Spielvogel (BCGEU-UAW)

Boston College Career Center Discussion
Peter Hunt, Assistant Director

Peter Hunt, Assistant Director of the Career Center, sought thoughts from the Senate on career-related topics and needs the Career Center should address in the future. Mr. Hunt began with current offerings and opened the floor to questions, comments, and suggestions. At this time, the School of Social Work, Carroll School of Management, and the Law School have their own career centers. All students can make appointments with the Career Center, except students in the Carroll School of Management. The Career Center posts information about their Career Fairs and job opportunities on Eagle Link. Each student is assigned a career coach and can request appointments online. The Career Center notes that half of their employers are interested in graduate students. The Career Center offers internship and job fairs, K-12 education fairs, social services fairs, STEM career fairs, resume/CV and cover letter workshops, and drop in appointments. Drop in appointments are approximately 15 to 20 minutes, while consultations are more in depth. While all events are open to graduate students, the job search workshops may not be helpful. The Career Center also offers sample resumes and CV’s for review. Career Center services are available up to 5 years after graduation.

Mr. Hunt asked about our impressions of the Career Center. Nathan (BCGEU-UAW) shared a description of a student-led lunch within his department. Christopher (GASA) mentioned that professors are helpful when transitioning into the Ph.D. program, but seeks more career opportunities for students who choose to stay in the academy. Marcus (SSW Collective) is
searching for a student-driven networking opportunity within his department. Jasmine (GSA) was excited to see a focus on graduate students, but hoped to see more advertising directly to graduate students who may not know the Career Center exists. Mr. Hunt asked for helpful events or services that could be offered in specific programs. Laura (STM Forum) found it helpful when the Career Center came to the STM, by request of the Dean, and spoke to industry and ministry specific careers. Christopher (GASA) mentioned that the Philosophy department would find department specific events helpful. Jasmine (GSA) would like to see a workshop on how to secure a graduate assistantship, the etiquette in searching for one, and a workshop that explains tuition remission. Marcus (SSW Forum) believed a regionally driven event would be beneficial to SSW students. Victoria (BCGEU-UAW) mentioned the importance of internships and would like more information on how to set them up within her program. Laura (STM Forum) loved the On Second Thought: Maybe I Should Negotiate My Salary organized by the Office of Graduate Student Life, featuring Louis Gaglini from the Career Center. Mr. Hunt asked for recommendations on how to get the work out about the Career Center and events. Nathan (BCGEU-UAW) recommended having the Career Center stop by his department’s weekly colloquium to mention programs. Christopher (GASA) recommended arranging a colloquium. Marcus (SSW Collective) requested Mr. Hunt’s contact information to be sent to Senators. Mr. Hunt opened the floor to additional comments. Nathan (BCGEU-UAW) mentioned that undergraduate students do not consider the Ph.D. an option because of lack of awareness to opportunities for tuition remission. Nathan (BCGEU-UAW) also wanted to see a focus on underrepresented populations, such as women and minorities. Laura (STM Forum) recommended offering assistance to students considering non-traditional career opportunities, such as Fulbright and the Core. Marcus (SSW Collective) recommended a separate career fair for graduate students in general.

The Career Center is open from 9AM-5PM, except on Wednesday the hours are 9AM-6PM. Drop in appointments are generally available between 11AM-4PM, Monday through Friday. Mr. Hunt is on a committee that includes the Director of the Career Center and the Assistant Director of Graduate Student Life, and plans to share the information his gathered at this meeting. Mr. Hunt can be contacted via email at peter.hunt@bc.edu.

Introduction to Senators

Carole Hughes, Director of Graduate Student Life

Dr. Carole Hughes introduced herself to the Senators for the first time officially. Dr. Hughes encouraged graduate students to stop using the word “marginalized” and to get in the game and at the table. Few universities have a facility for graduate students. Dr. Hughes spoke of her history at Boston College, as well as a history of the Murray Graduate Student Center. Dr. Hughes reinforced that Boston College needs graduate students, especially with its Research One designation. Graduate students make the institution much more interesting and intellectual. Dr. Hughes recognized that it is an undergraduate centered institution, teaching approximately 9,200 undergraduates. Dr. Hughes sits at the table with Department Deans and works hard with the Office of Graduate Student Life’s limited staff to provide high quality, signature programming.
Dr. Hughes attended a conference at Washington University at St. Louis that focused specifically on supporting graduate students. At a majority of campuses, graduate student staff members were not hugely funded. Popular focuses included career development and mental health. At Boston College, there are 8 schools and colleges with 8 Deans. There are Assistant Deans assigned to graduate students, but there needs to be more of a push and focus on these students. The Office of Graduate Student Life is not an academic Dean, but works to recognize issues within the graduate community and determine how to move forward. The Office of Graduate Student Life also provides programming for graduate students and sends out a monthly newsletter. A few signature programs of the Office of Graduate Student Life include Dissertation Bootcamp, GPS Graduate Retreat, and Grad Talks. Dr. Hughes hopes to expand Dissertation Bootcamp.

The University developed a new strategic plan with 4 goals/initiatives. Initiative number 2 and goal number 2 focus on undergraduate and graduate student formation, which is quite revolutionary. Dr. Hughes has never seen the words “graduate students” written in the strategic plan. She has chosen to approach this as an opportunity. Carole’s definition of formation includes, but is not limited to, career development, a focus on the dissertation, leadership, and Grad Talks. Dr. Hughes is working to develop programs that are more formative and more helpful for resource development. The Assistant Deans talk about formation, but a language must be developed to explain what it means. Dr. Hughes mentions graduate students in the Division of Student Affairs meetings that she attends, in order to keep graduate students in the conversation. She always reminds people that there are 4,500 graduate students and these students need help as well. The Graduate Student Association works closely with the Office of Graduate Student Life on programs and attends weekly staff meetings to keep the two offices connected. Dr. Hughes also encouraged Senators to make use of the Murray Graduate Student Center space.

Dr. Hughes opened the floor to questions and comments. Marcus (SSW Collective) wanted to see between communication and coordination between departments. He has noticed that dual degree students often experience silos. Andrew (GPA) sought tangible support for graduate students, such as supporting 4th and 5th year job searching graduate students like Fordham University’s English department. Laura (STM Forum) liked the idea of bringing formation beyond the normal connotation and encouraged everyone to continue to think about formation widely and incorporate the Jesuit, Catholic tradition. Christopher (GASA) requested more parking availability.

Dr. Hughes can be reached via hughesc@bc.edu. Her email will be sent to the Senators.

**Executive Board Updates**

**Executive Director Updates**

The Office of Graduate Student Life will have a videographer who will be capturing clips from various graduate student groups to create a professional video centered around graduate students.

The Dinner with Dr. Barbara Jones has been postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. GSA will work to get a new date on the calendar in the Spring semester.
GSA responded to the racial incidents on campus with a letter sent in an email to graduate students. The letter is posted on the GSA website.

GSA was seeking two more Senators to serve on the Disciplinary Committee. Two Senators were assigned to the vacant positions.

**Disciplinary Committee** – Christopher (GASA), Laura (STM Forum), Katie (GEA)

**Hiring Committee** – Andrew (GPA), Osato (GSCA), Christopher (GASA)

**Programming Committee** – Gabriel (GISA), Marcus (SSW Collective), Ferguson (GMA)

**Director of Finance Updates**

A discussion of paying graduate student organization representatives will occur at the February Senate Meeting.

**Director of Programming Updates**

GSA’s upcoming events include De-Stress Fest from December 4-8, including a free day at the Plex. Grad Ball will occur on April 21 at the New England Aquarium.

**Senate Meeting Calendar**

A Doodle Poll will be sent out over winter break to select a time for the Spring Senate meetings.