

GC Meeting Minutes

Date: 12/10/18

Location: Great Hall, Levering Hall

Minutes taken by: Eugenia Volkova, Secretary

Note: Quorum was not reached for this meeting, so these minutes do not constitute a real meeting, but rather describe what happened at an informal meeting.

Abbreviations:

Postponed due to lack of quorum - **PNQ**

Agenda:

1. Approval of Minutes from GC Meeting on 11/26 - **PNQ**
2. Eboard Report
3. Special Vote - Prof Dev Chair - **PNQ**
4. Group request - Blockchain club - **PNQ**
5. ICE Response and Vote on GROs position
6. Issues regarding OIE
7. Security Chair update/Private police force - new timeline update
8. Questions/comments/concerns

EBoard Report: Prateek Bhatnagar

- Most of the points that were discussed at the last E-Board meeting will be discussed throughout today's presentation.
- As an important note, the chairs met with VP Shollenberger and got an updated timeline for the private police force.

PhD Advisory Committee Updates: Elliot Wainwright

- The PhD Advisory Board had their first meeting. The main purpose of the committee is to be a "soundboard" for Nancy Kass. There is a single representative (PhD candidate) from every school. There will be a document of recommendations that is compiled. The meetings will happen about once per month.
- There are two main initiatives
 - An increase in career services for PhD students who are not planning on going into academia
 - WSE has been pushing to get more resources in the career center.
 - A streamlined and unified approach to the mentor-mentee relationship.. Single representative from each school.
 - Right now, there is no written expectation for what the mentor should be doing. Document set to guide the relationship that you will have with your advisor.
- There will be a short google doc survey going out about what we want Elliot to bring up in the meetings. This is a good opportunity for any sorts of concerns:
 - What about the terms of funding varying (for different faculty and departments) for conferences? There is a lot of disparity in how departments handle this kind of thing.
 - What qualifies a PhD student for being put on probation? Ambiguous and daunting and is handled on a case-by-case basis.

GRO ICE Response: Michael Busch

- The university has told us that they will be going forward with the contracts that are currently being in place and no contracts will be cancelled. They referred to the statement that was shared with everyone (the whole school).
- Here is the current response, drafted by Michael and Lauren from the GRO to the University regarding the Administrative Decisions regarding ongoing JHU/ICE contracts:

Graduate Representative Organization (GRO) Statement on Recent Johns Hopkins Administrative Decisions regarding ongoing JHU/ICE Contracts

Dear all,

The GRO General Council on November 26th, 2018, voted in majority (21 in Favor-4 Abstain-0 Oppose) to endorse the recent [petition](#) condemning university contracts with U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and support the student-led activist coalition, the Hopkins Coalition Against ICE.

The General Council (GC) would like to acknowledge some of the comments mentioned in our discussion regarding ICE. The GRO advocates on behalf of all graduate students and works to ensure that the graduate student body can discuss and act upon issues that directly affect them on campus. The GC acknowledges that not all graduate students will have the same opinion on ICE, or these contracts. However, given that silence on this issue signifies a problematic compliance with the administration and a non-response on the behalf of the graduate body, the GRO moved to support this movement.

The GRO sent a formal request to the Provost's office for information regarding the ICE contracts with JHU in September following the first petition by Professor Drew Daniel which garnered over 2,000 signatures from the JHU community. The formal response by the administration, which the GRO had shared with the graduate student body, was agreed upon by the GC to be unsatisfactory. It did not contain enough transparency regarding the content of the contracts, nor did it contain any concessions to the original demands of the Hopkins community. In addition, the GRO does not agree with the use of academic freedom to defend these contracts.

The GRO will add its name to the list of Johns Hopkins Student Organizations that endorse this petition and will support our peers and fellow community members in the Hopkins Coalition Against ICE.

In Solidarity,

Graduate Representative Organization

Issues Regarding OIE: Prateek Bhatnagar, Michael Busch, Eugenia Volkova

- Recently, and for a long time in the past, there have been many issues with OIE. The GRO received an email about this matter, and the general student body was also notified, and was alerted that there have website errors on the OIE website that have caused cases of sexual harassment to be blocked and not received. Their response was that they are sorry and would fix it. However, now there are more cases that are coming up.
- Presentation by the #JHTOO Campaign
 - Talia Katz (PhD student in Anthropology) and Sojung Kim (PhD student in Anthropology).

- Hopes that the GRO would sign on to endorsing [the petition](#). Consulted with various legal counsel (Deborah Katz, attorney). Everything that they say is verifiable, do not see any legal issues with discussing this matter in the specific way we are discussing it now.
- What happened: There was an anthropology conference. Grad students went to a bar. Professor Juan Obarrio tried to flirt and dance with a student. She was not interested. He grabbed her from behind with both hands and dragged her across the dance floor. Intense assault. The next day he tried to continue flirting with the student.
- What happened afterward: The assault was reported to OIE on Monday and it was reported to the Police later, but not that night. OIE was supposed to conclude the investigation within 60 days. There was a random woman who was so appalled that she handed out her business card and Hopkins never reached out to this witness.
- Problems with the OIE Investigation (later led to activism and demands by #JHTOO):
 - Failed to link this action to prior inappropriate behavior by Professor Obarrio.
 - The witnesses and the survivor were required to tell and retell their story.
 - OIE failed to make all the students aware of any available mental health resources available to them.
 - OIE did not notify anyone of what was happening - public safety risk.
- The survivor: Survivor centered approach - survivor would like to remain anonymous. She came to Hopkins to present her work at a conference. She approved of the posters and the language of the petition. She does not want to be named at this time.
- The petition: Many people may have read the petition or heard of the petition. Firstly, it tries to clarify exactly what has been happening with the assault committed by Professor Obarrio. Additionally, it should be noted that Hopkins is currently under federal investigation for failure to comply with Title IX regarding assaults that occurred at a frat house in 2013 and the student body not being notified of these assaults.
 - Asks for revoking of tenure
 - Asks for why it took 7 months instead of 60 days to conclude the investigation
 - Asks to improve mental health resources for survivors
 - OIE needs to have better mental health training as many stories from survivors include disturbing reports of what OIE has done.
 - Asks to take anonymous accounts seriously
 - Issue a statement promising to make improvements and apologize for this matter.
- The #JHTOO campaign admits that they would like to harness the energy around this issue and push for changes. OIE did enact some cosmetic reforms, but those were clearly not effective.
- Over 1600 students and other community members have signed the petition. There has been a protest and a rally.
- The 18 cases that were mishandled due to the websites and this case are considered to be closely related because the 18 cases represent survivors that could have come forward could have helped in supporting this student against Professor Obarrio if they also had cases related to Professor Obarrio.

- The way in which JHTOO found out about the 18 cases was that someone sent a screenshot of their email from OIE regarding the case not going through the website correctly. Very upset that the administration has not responded to this separately from the website problem.
- Emblematic of the university's negligence of this: When JHTOO brought the petition to Garland, no one came out to take the petition and to acknowledge that they were there.

Discussion about OIE Issues:

- Terrible situation, sadly we do not have quorum to vote on anything today. So we can sign the petition as individuals or as a GRO E-Board but not as the GC. We should discuss this and vote to sign the petition at the first GRO GC meeting of next semester.
- Would Talia and Sojung be willing to come back to a GC meeting? Yes. they represent anthropology at the GRO meetings, so they will be here regardless.
- Is there an info sheet that we can send out? On the petition, there is information about the matter and what the OIE has done about the matter.
- OIE is managed by the Provost's Office.
- More generally, Michael and Eugenia went to an event in the fall that dealt with the status of female faculty at JHU and there were cases of OIE mishandling cases there as well.

Private Police Timeline: Prateek Bhatnagar

- The university will be moving forward with legislation and getting the private police force on the docket.
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will have details of jurisdiction and treatment.
- There is a question of consistency regarding what they will do and what they say that they will do. For example, there is legislation regarding the ability of police officers to get trained and to get additional training in Maryland, they can't get trained anywhere else except for one center, where JHU cannot train police officers. So how will training happen? We don't actually know because what the university is saying is not legal.
- Once the bill is on the docket, we can still fight it and go to the legislatures. It would be more useful for us to strategize once there is a plan. At this point, even if they (the administration) have something, they are not sharing it with anyone else. There is an updated draft of the legislative bill that is public, but it contains very few details.
- The administration has said that their current plans involve trying to gauge the issues of what the student body will latch on to. If the GC feels strongly about this, we need to pivot and react strongly as soon as the MOU is public. We need to work hard to get quorum the first meeting when we get back.

Questions/comments/concerns:

- Travel grant lottery. No one in the department knows what that involves, what does it involve? Jaime is in charge of doing the lottery and getting things approved for funding. It

involves an application process. It boils down to 3+ year graduate students who hasn't been to a conference ever or in the past year, this gives you more points in the system. In the end, the number of points will let the random lottery decide. Make sure to check with Eugenia if your department is eligible first.