1. **Call to Order and Agenda Review [2 min]**

Meeting called to order at 6:06 PM by Eugenia. No questions about the agenda.

1. **Approval of Minutes [2 min]**

**Motion to approve the minutes from December 2nd. The motion is seconded. The motion passes with one abstention.**

1. **E-Board Report [20 min]**
   1. **A Reminder on Speaking Order**

A quick reminder, only speak when called by the co-chairs. Be respectful and direct comments to the co-chairs.

* 1. **Lighting of the Quads Follow-up**

The GRO had a tend where we handed out free pizza. This was manned by Tim Nichols and Swetha – we went through $250 of pizza in ~ 18 minutes. It seems to have been popular and we would like to do it again. It was unclear if the pizza kept graduate students involved in the event, as people may have left quickly. Whether or not they all stayed, it was successful. There is a suggestion that next year we could do both pizza and some dessert (such as Insomnia cookies) later on.

There is a question as to where the table was. The table was ~200 ft away from Brody in the Wyman quad.

* 1. **Lunch with the Trustees**

Eugenia attended a luncheon with some Trustees and high-ranking administrators. The co-chair were invited by the Provost to represent the GRO. The only exciting outcome was that there will be enhanced graduate involvement in some committees going forward.

* 1. **Grad Involvement Chair**

Our graduate involvement chair had to step down due to personal issues, in an amicable departure from the GRO. We will hold elections next semester.

* 1. **Advocacy Updates**
     1. **NLRB Rule Change Petition – Article**

An article about the NLRB rule change came out in the JHU newsletter, including interviews with both TRU and the GRO. Some GRO e-board members are quoted in the article.

* + 1. **GRO Engagement with LGBTQ Life - Survey Vote**

We discussed previously that the GRO should be involved in a survey about LGBTQ student life at JHU. The GC had not previously approved dispersing the survey to the whole graduate student body. Jack (social chair) worked on the survey with the LGBTQ Life office, and presented some additional information. The impetus for the survey was that members of this community reported significantly higher rates of sexual harassment, and we want to delve into that issue and determine what can be done to hep the community (both the GRO as well as the LGBTQ Life office). He opened the floor to questions.

**There is motion to approve distribution of the survey to the graduate student body at large. The motion is seconded. The motion passes.**

* + 1. **Changes in Summer and Intersession Course Selection Policies**

We have been in email communication with Assistant Dean Sean Recroft since October 24th. He has said he is interested in attending a meeting but has not been communicative in scheduling such an attendance. Eugenia suggests that we escalate this in the administration.

A GC rep mentioned that some of this was discussed at the WGS town hall, as was mentioned in a prior GRO meeting.

* 1. **Committee Updates**
     1. **Homewood grad resource fair planning**

Elliot and Eugenia are both on this committee, which is to plan a graduate resource fair in February. It will be similar in structure to the graduate development fair (week long) held on the med campus recently. This will be a one-day event with a large number of possible events.

* + 1. **PhD Advisory Committee to Dr. Nancy Kass (PAC)**

The last meeting was split across two topics. One was the diversity report for graduate students, which had just recently been released (to the committee – it should be public near the end of December). There was discussion and brainstorming on what to do with regards to diversity. Daniel noted that a member of the Black Graduate Student Union was particularly helpful in keeping that discussion on topic and useful.

Eugenia asked if there is something the GRO can do to help in these initiatives. Daniel does not believe it is something within the GROs scope, at least not directly. Most of the issues discussed were relating to admissions processes, hiring more diverse faculty, better funding for diversity events through student organizations, *etc.* We should continue to support graduate student organizations – particularly those holding cultural events or other diversity related events.

It was noted by a GC member that there has been a movement to eliminate general GRE scores from admissions nationally. It was asked if that was discussed at the meeting. Daniel said that it was discussed at the PhD meeting, and that Nancy Kass agreed with the idea of removing the GRE from admissions, but that ‘higher ups’ are pushing back on removing it fully. It was noted by some GRO members that certain departments do not use the data. A Chem-BE rep noted that her department had tried to eliminate GRE scores, but was informed by WSE that they had to collect the scores even if they were not used, which contributes to a financial burden. The Biophysics noted that several departments in KSAS have dropped GRE scores being a required submission, and that the school has supported it. The Physics representative said that within her department it is challenging to push against the GRE due to faculty ideas about admissions.

A GC rep noted that another issue with regards to diversity is maintaining diverse students enrolment in departments once they come to JHU – additional support mechanisms are important to improve and maintain diversity in the University overall. The Biophysics representative noted that a committee on which he serves (HCIE – Homewood Council for Inclusive Excellence) tries to specifically investigate these issues and determine how to address them.

1. **There is a motion that a committee or working group from the GRO is formed to come up with a concrete actions or talking points relating to enhancing diversity in JHU graduate programs, informed by the information to be released in the pending report.**

There is a proposed friendly amendment: **that we request information from each program’s administrators to determine what their current admissions requirements are and whether they include the GRE.**

The friendly amendment is accepted.

1. **The motion stands: that a committee or working group from the GRO is formed to come up with concrete actions or talking points relating to enhancing diversity in JHU graduate programs, informed by the information to be released in the pending diversity report. In doing so, the committee will request information from each program’s administrators to determine what their current admissions requirements are and whether they include the GRE.**

The Biophyiscs representative proposed that he can put this committee in contact with the chair of the HCIE.

1. **There is a motion to make a public statement calling on WSE to allow departments to determine individually if they want to require the GRE for graduate school admissions.**

The motion is seconded.

The motion is voted on first. **The motion passes.**

The first motion was seconded after the second, and was therefore voted on second.

1. **The motion stands: that a committee or working group from the GRO is formed to come up with concrete actions or talking points relating to enhancing diversity in JHU graduate programs, informed by the information to be released in the pending diversity report. In doing so, the committee will request information from each program’s administrators to determine what their current admissions requirements are and whether they include the GRE.**

The motion is seconded.

**The motion passes.**

Daniel updated the GRO that the PhD Advisory Committee was informed that Slate will be the new software package used for tracking graduate school admissions through the whole process. Daniel was also concerned about information about a proposed program (AEFIS) to track how departments are progressing their students through their degree programs. The deans would have access to information about how all these programs are performing against a programmatic set of metrics, which Daniel finds to be very concerning. The Biophyiscs representative mentioned hearing about a program that would require that all WSE research groups have a minimum number of students (5) who all finish within a mandated timeframe (5 years), where departments who do not meet the requirements will be financially penalized. Daniel noted that Stephen Gange.

Elliot agreed that these issues are problematic for graduate students in general, but that we should get more direct information from Stephen Gange – perhaps inviting him to a GRO meeting.

* + 1. **PATH Committee Update**

The PATH (Provost Advisory Team on Healthcare) had its first committee meeting of the academic year. Last year this group was very active (as seen in prior GC minutes). This meeting essentially discussed the same kinds of issues discussed in the health and wellbeing working group discussed at a prior GC meeting. Stephen Gange will now be overseeing the PATH committee. Benj provided the following updates:

* They are improving the mental health triage options available on the Homewood and medical campuses. The goal is to not have either campus only refer out or refer in, but to have both used a combined approach.
* There will be online mental health modules made available online through a program called Silver Cloud, focusing on anxiety, stress and depression. They will be used both within and provided outside of the counselling center.
* There was some discussion and provided statistics on graduate student insurance, but no real discussion about proposed changes. A new software package should be implemented for enrolment and communications about insurance. It is already in implementation for dental and vision. There is ongoing discussion about merging insurance plans across the campuses, but it is a long-term issue.
* There is some administrative work going on relating to services for smoking-cessation. This is seen as one step towards a smoke-free campus, which will have its own working group starting in the spring. It is expected that testing and rollout of these smoking cessation programs will occur by February.
* Regarding gender neutral bathrooms, there has been significant progress on other campuses. In the Public Health buildings, many bathrooms have been converted to gender neutral bathrooms. Similar work is planned at Peabody. New buildings or renovations are being planned with gender neutral facilities – this will impact Homewood most dramatically in residence halls and the new student center. Benj requested that continued effort be made for renovations in existing academic buildings.
* The graduate student emergency fun has been founded, and it is being utilized but needs to be better advertised. Many of the issues seem to relate to housing.
* Policies regarding vaccination coverage is under discussion. A new policy exists which states that across all departments, vaccines are reimbursable. Some departments are frustrated, as their faculty may not wish to cover the full cost of vaccines, and departments where their students may require more vaccine use are not thrilled but it is currently the policy.

Elliot asked if Benj could provide either formal minutes or an executive summary of the PATH meetings be provided to the GC. Benj said that he would provide his notes, and that there will be two future meetings next semester.

There was a question as to who pushed the smoke-free campus initative. Elliot and Benj noted that this was initially an SGA initative, but he is not sure who is behind the smoking-cessation. The Physics rep asked if the smoking cessation programs would be available to JHU contractors, as many of the smokers on campus are staff who are contract workers. It was not clear whether there will be any work done to provide these services for staff.

1. **WGS Fellowship Letter to Dean Roller [20 min]**

An email was sent to Dean Roller, which the entire GC was CC’d on. Dean Roller responded, thanking the GRO for sending the email and essentially just attached his initial response to the open letter. He did note that the Dean’s office is in open discussion with certain affected students and faculty members. Eugenia displayed the letter Dean Roller sent along with the changes to that document from the first one Dean Roller sent. Many of the changes related to an ongoing search for a tenure-stream faculty member.

Daniel pointed out that saying a ‘program’ can have a tenure-stream faculty member does not make sense, as programs do not have their own faculty. The physics representative mentioned that at the WGS town hall it felt that the Dean was unprepared to answer many of question posed, and that the answers he did provide did not adequately address issues raised. In essence, Dean Roller’s response did not provide any new information or address any of the concerns voiced by the GRO and other graduate students.

Eugenia noted that she and Elliot have a meeting scheduled with Dean Roller next Tuesday, Dec 17th. Elliot noted that it would be useful for the co-chairs to have written responses and information from the GC at large and those folks well-informed about this issue to prepare them for the meeting.

There was a question from the Biophysics representative: during our last discussion of this, it seemed that this change was not Dean Roller’s decision. Is that the case? It seemed that there was someone new in charge of this.

Eugenia commented that this may be due to confusion with Dean Recroft and the issue the GRO has discussed with regards to intersession courses. It was confirmed by Dean Roller at the WGS town hall that this was *his* move.

**There is a motion to solicit feedback on this response from graduate students who are affected by the WGS funding cuts to provide to the Co-chairs.**

Daniel commented that the letter essentially says ‘don’t worry about it,’ but there has been very few changes from prior communications. Regardless of what Eugenia and Elliot say, they need to ensure that he knows that his approach is not a sufficient answer.

There was a comment that the a WGS/History tenure-track hire is not what Dean Roller makes it sound like – Joanna has seen the job posting, and while it says they want someone with some specialty in WGS related issues, the job posting is not specifically for a WGS faculty member.

It was noted that a lot of the legwork relating to putting together this information has been done already by WGS related graduate students who wrote their own response and point outline. The Physics representative can provide contact information for the WGS petition writers.

There is a friendly amendment that the e-board and GC members who have been highly involved in assessing this issue and preparing letters for the GRO aid in providing talking points and information, with direct responses to Dean Roller’s responses and how they are inadequate in addressing the issue.

The friendly amendment is accepted. The motion stands as: **There is a motion to solicit feedback on this response from graduate students who are affected by the WGS funding cuts to provide to the Co-chairs. Concurrently, e-board and GC members who have been highly involved in assessing this issue and preparing letters for the GRO aid in providing talking points and information, with direct responses to Dean Roller’s comments and how they are inadequate in addressing the relevant issues.**

There is a friendly amendment to remove the general graduate student body portion of the motion. The friendly amendment is accepted. The motion stands as: **There is a motion that the e-board and GC members who have been highly involved in assessing this issue and preparing letters for the GRO aid in providing talking points and information, with direct responses to Dean Roller’s comments and how they are inadequate in addressing the relevant issues.**

**The motion is seconded.**

**The motion passes with two abstentions.**

1. **TRU Work-in [15 min]**

Joanna – TRU member – presented to the GRO on an upcoming TRU event on **December 12th** that they would like to coordinate with the GC on. The event is a “Work-in,” wherein graduate students essentially take their normal work-day and perform it together in the library (event from **8AM – 3PM**), to demonstrate to the campus at large that graduate students are workers and to show solidarity. This is inspired due to the proposed changes by the NLRB that graduate students at private universities would no longer be considered as workers. The NLRB is required to accept comments on the proposed rule change – they have had to extend their comment period multiple times due to the vast number of responses, this event is also aimed to publicize this feedback period and induce further comments. Those in lab spaces that cannot be mobile are able to post pictures with appropriate hastages.

TRU is requesting that the GRO inform the graduate student body that the event is occurring (send information about the time, location, and purpose). A secondary request would be that the GRO support the event by stating in their email that we support the event, or by having a representative from the GRO acome to the event in their official capacity to answer questions about the GRO, the issue in general, and to gather information from graduate students at large.

**There is a motion to accept all of TRUs requests: IE that we send information about the time, location, and purpose of the event; that we provide written support for the event in that written email and encourage graduate student participation; allow the GRO logo to appear on promotional material; and that a representative of the GRO (appointed from GC or E-board) attend the event in their official capacity to discuss the NLRB issue with graduate students and provide information about the GRO.**

**The motion was seconded.**

There is a question as to whether this could be spun as a graduate student move to ‘occupy’ space away from undergraduates in the library. Joanna believes this could be a concern, but the space in the library is open to all and similar issues can occur in reverse. The event is also only for a portion of a single day. Undergraduates will also be welcome during the event.

There is a question if TRU has a flyer already for the event. The answer is that there is no formal flyer developed yet. It was noted by the Biophysics rep that approving GRO sign-on to an un-developed flyer could end in negative consequences. The biophysics rep also noted that having a member attend in ‘official capacity’ could result in people discussing issues from their own perspective and having that appear to be the GROs ‘official stance.’ Elliot noted that he is willing to attend the event as the official representative.

Jaime noted that including our logo on the promotional material may be problematic unless we determine how exactly the logo would appear and how it would function within the flyer.

Joanna noted that the requests made were meant to be options for support; TRU would appreciate support even if the GRO doesn’t allow for its logo to be used.

**The motion was amended by trifurcation:**

* + 1. **There is a motion that we send information about the time, location, and purpose of the event.**

**The motion is seconded**

* + 1. **That we provide written support for the event in that written email, encourage graduate student participation, and allow the GRO logo to appear on promotional material including flyers and the Facebook event.**

**The motion is seconded.**

* + 1. **There is a motion that a representative of the GRO (appointed from GC or E-board) attend the event in their official capacity to answer questions about the organization, to discuss the NLRB issue with graduate students and discuss the reason for the GROs support of the event.**

**The motion is seconded.**

A point of clarification was requested as to whether the first motion needs to be voted on. It was explained by the secretary that per precedent, we do not need to vote on it, and will instead consider the later three motions.

Eugenia noted that the GRO supporting the event may make things harder for the event, as was seen for the Sit-In potluck. The physics representative stated that we should get clarity from the university about what will lead to those kinds of issues from the administration, and that we should not need to be concerned about negatively affecting events by supporting them ideologically. Elliot noted that this can be avoided by not placing the GRO logo on the official flyers.

A request was made that the vote taken by secret ballot. By show of hand it was approved that a single ballot be used to vote on all three motions. The vote was taken. The results are as follows:

**Motion 1: 22-1-1, motion passes.**

**Motion 2: 12-9-3, motion passes.**

**Motion 3: 18-4-2,**

1. **Intercampus Speed Dating [10 min]**

*This item was moved forward in the agenda and discussed before the WGS fellowship letter.*

Vittorio presented his ideas on a speed dating event in January. The date/time/vendors have not been fully planned yet, but he wants to get feedback and approval from the GC before those details are finalized to ensure it can go forward in general. There will be three tables, with different rough groupings of gender identities. Tickets will be sold to ensure that people are more likely to commit and actually attend. The tickets will also be used to ask about gender identity and the gender identities people would like to meet. This can allow for improved planning. Vittorio asked for any feedback or comments from the GC.

Elliot asked if we should do something with regards to the title to ensure that the LGBTQ community is well aware that it is an LGBTQ friendly event. Vittorio said that he was planning on including that information strongly in the advertisements, but not in the title. He has been in contact with the GQSA through Jack.

Eugenia suggested that we week GQSA approval or endorsement. Vittorio will look into that.

Eugenia asked if we need alcohol licensure for the venue. Vittorio believes we will and is looking into how to manage that work.

There was a question as to how the time will be split up.

**There is a motion to approve the funding as requested by the Intercampus Coordinator for the event. The motion is seconded. The motion passes.**

1. **Professional Development Chair Update [5 min]**
2. **Wellness Coordinator Update [5 min]**
3. **Open Discussion & Questions**
4. **Adjournment**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.**

**\***The Following Committees have no scheduled update:

* + - 1. Provost’s Advisory Team on Healthcare (PATH)
      2. Parental Concerns Working Group
      3. Tobacco Cessation Committee
      4. Student Center Planning Committee
      5. Suicide Prevention Awareness, Response and Coordination (JH-SPARC)
      6. Provost's Sexual Violence Advisory Committee (SVAC)