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

Meeting called to order at 6:03 PM by Eugenia when a quorum prevailed.

1. **Approval of Minutes**

**There is a motion to approve the minutes.**

**The motion is seconded.**

**The motion passes.**

1. **E-board Report (Eugenia and Elliot) [20 min]** 
   1. **Constitution Overhaul (Shane)**
      1. **Comment Discussion and Review**

Elliot Wainwright took minutes for this portion as Shane was presenting. All the comments that were received electronically have been addressed. Most were incorporated. Two outstanding points: Meeting agenda – any graduate student can submit an item to the agenda. Unintuitive interpretation. New revision: chairs would have the authority to determine what ends up on the agenda. Comment was raised that there should be an appeal to have an agenda item included or included into new business at the end of the meeting. Before making any decisions, we wanted feedback on this point. Question: If the E-board decides that the agenda item is to be included or not, when exactly does the appeal process. Response: During E-board report could be placed to bring up the appeal. The GC could move to have it included on this agenda or next agenda, etc. Comment: There’s no special privilege for GC members in proposing agenda items. Comment: This coming a bit from some previous GRO years where previous E-board members were trying to force items onto the current years agenda. Comment: So long as there is the option to overturn, the E-board could always add or reject agenda items. Comment: What if we have a section in agenda (perhaps coupled with the agenda overview) to solicit new agenda items? This could be a good opportunity to present items onto the agenda, either that meeting or later.

The second concern of note – there is opposition to the idea of secret ballots as a generality. Comment: There is agreement on this stance. This is a representative-heavy department, it is necessary to be clear how people are voting. Comment: Some cases have arisen because of peer pressure people have voted not how they feel. Comment: GC members should have some level commitment to their positions, ideologically and politically. Comment: This issue is specifically regarding impeachment, perhaps roll-call is the way to make this work. Comment: If people have problem with the decorum of the body such that they are uncomfortable speaking their mind or voting in a certain way, we have larger problems as an organization. Comment: We could provide a tabulated ballot, which would remove the line-by-line proceeding vote. Comment: Removing a hostile or inflammatory body, is this something we can do? Response: We may be able to expand the Communications Policy (E-board), to include GC departmental representatives. Comment: If the issue is social pressure, then perhaps we need to include more institutional mechanisms to ensure that this body stay representative nature. Comment: Voting on policies versus voting on people who run the organization and meetings are two separate things. Comment: Appointments are made by folks of the department, but, graduate students are just people, can we do a ballot with department recorded? Clarification: Does the E-board vote on impeachment? Currently it is written as GC, which includes both.

Straw poll one: all in favor of only allowing Departmental Representatives to vote on impeachment.

A strong majority is in favor.

Straw poll two: all in favor of having a non-secret ballot for these votes such that there is a transparent record of the vote.

Beyond those changes, Shane will also

* 1. **Advocacy Items with Status updates**
     1. **Security Advisory Committee Email Response**

Received an email from Provost Kumar that he received our email, but is out of country and will not fully respond until he is back.

* + 1. **Second Look Visit Days for URM/FGLI Candidates**

We have had several planning meetings relating to these events. They are in late March (26th-27th). Only 7 students have committed to attend, which may mean that we may not have this again in the future. Some challenges are reaching all departments as well as the differences in recruitment cycles.

There may also be challenges this year due to COVID-19. Some departments are already cancelling their visit days, either from the Department pushing this or from having the school pushing it.

Elliot mentioned that there has been a lot of discussion as to whether or not this is an effective method of recruiting more diverse candidates.

* + 1. **Safe Zone Trainings**

The second training occurred, and it had full attendance. We are in discussions with Demere about having an ongoing partnership to have these occur again on a semesterly or yearly basis.

Jack noted that the sessions were really good and there were a lot of excellent questions. It was a successful initiative. The fact that it was graduate student only made it more open and useful.

* 1. **Hopkins Votes**
     1. **Mayoral Question Project Meeting**

We are still partnering with HopkinsVotes on this initiative. An email should have come out on Friday to request the submission of questions to ask the Mayoral candidates for Baltimore. The interviews will occur on March 23rd. We would like the GRO to have three questions submitted, and they need to be submitted for final approval.

Please submit questions tonight (03/09) if at all possible. Elliot noted that the oversight on the questions is going to be very minimal.

* 1. **Gift of Life Donor Drive**

If anyone is interesting in helping to host a bone marrow drive on campus, *please reach out to the executive board.* We can provide funds to help with the event, but do not have the manpower.

* 1. **Announcements**

We are aware that SLI reimbursements have been taking a long time to process. Please let the Co-chairs know if you are having issues, we will continue to push SLI as much as we can.

1. **Group Funding Requests (Jaime) [5 min]**
   1. **GQSA Gayme Night**

The request is from the GQSA, and a representative presented for the event. The total cost of the event is $750 and the GQSA is requesting $200 for the event from the GRO.

**There is a motion to fully fund the event.**

**The motion is seconded.**

**The motion passes.**

1. **Social Chair Update (Jack) [5 min]**
   1. **Spring Fair**

The biergarten will happen again this year. Immediately after the biergarten, we will have an outside area with a dunk tank and a tent.

Jack is asking for dunk tank volunteers. If you are interested (or willing) to be in the dunk tank, please let Jack know.

There is a question as to whether we have heard anything about Spring Fair regarding COVID-19. Jack has not heard anything so far.

Amend the agenda section to 1: include an agenda review at the beginning, 2: explicitly state that GC members can request items not included by the e-board to be added again to

* 1. **Off-Campus Happy Hour**

No update on this.

1. **Advocacy Chair Update (Tim) [5 min]**

A survey was sent out to graduate students about what time they would prefer to register for classes. The largest percentage of students had no preference, but more students preferred 10PM to 7AM.

Many students did report that they had issues registering for classes. We know which departments these students hailed from, so we can determine which departments we should reach out to about the issues they are having.

1. **Professional Development Chair Update (Dora) [5 min]**
   1. **PhD International Student Career Chat on March 13th at 5PM in Hodson 301**

Roshni Rao are organizing an event for international students, which will be held on March 13th. 40 graduate students have already signed up for the event. This will be an event for Roshni to introduce herself to international graduate students and to inquire about their concerns/questions regarding career services.

1. **Welcome Chair Update (Daniel) [5 min]**

Daniel resolved some issues pending from last semester. He is planning one final event that is not alcohol related. One suggested was an outdoor-based event. He met with the Outdoor pursuits people, but they apparently need much longer in advance to be able to feasible schedule things. This may be pursued in future years.

The other idea that Daniel is pursuing is a symphony at the Peabody institute. There would be snacks and drinks on campus here, and then the group would travel to the show. Current issues relate to getting bulk tickets. The event would be the second week of May.

1. **Wellness Coordinator Update [10 min] (Parijat)**

Parijat was not present, so this item was skipped.

1. **Advocacy Presentation (JHU Sit-In) [30 min]**
   1. **Presentation Entitled “In Support of Freedom of Expression at JHU”**

Three representatives of the Sit-In, including two students targeted with an administrative hearing for protesting an event on February 3rd hosting the ex-deputy director of the CIA, Mike Morel. Information relating to Mike Morel was provided to the GC about Mike Morell as well as a letter outlining demands from the students involved in these protests. The representatives then recapped some of the material contained in these documents to the GRO, outlining their issues with Mike Morell.

On February 3rd, a group of 12 graduate students – largely international students who hail from counties affected by CIA policies and potentially by Morell himself. The event was an open talk at 6PM. It was not a class and was open to all JHU students. This was very shortly after the US killed the Iranian general Qasem Soleimani.

After Morell was introduced, students protested during the talk. They were present for between 15 and 17 minutes before eventually complying with campus security and being escorted away from the event. The representatives note that during the time they were present, what occurred was essentially a dialogue between the protestors and the attendees.

Four of the twelve involved students were then charged with violation of the student code of conduct. From meetings with Dana Broadnax, it is not well known why those four students were selected. Dana Broadnax has allegedly stated it was a “visibility” issue. The four students targeted for hearings by Dana Broadnax have met with Dana Broadnax. She said that they were the students “visible” in a video of the event. The representative noted that all of the protesters were visible in the video. All of the students charged were active participants in the JHU sit in last semester. Two of them were some of those that were granted ‘amnesty’ for those events. They were informed that they may have their amnesty for those events revoked, though it was not revoked in this instance.

Sebastian noted that it was never clear what ‘amnesty’ was meant at any time during the process, and the students involved interpreted it in a more common way indicating that they were fully cleared. It was noted that Dana Broadnax has stated that she is still investigating the other students involved.

It was noted that the University ‘supports the right to engage in acts of public expression’ and that any expressions of controversial opinions are supported by the University (in the student code of conduct). The fact that graduate students are being targeted, particularly international graduate students, shows an imbalance of power and a breach of the stance of the University on protest.

Sebastian noted that there is no clear list of sanctions and how they relate to breaches of the code of conduct, so there is no transparency as to what the students charged are facing. It was noted that regardless of what your opinions are regarding the underlying ethics of the protest, the concerns here relate to how the University is processing these protests and that there is no uniformity in who is charged, no transparency on what they are facing, et cetera.

It was also noted that a recent protest occurred with 100 protestors and 20 counter-protestors. None of those students are being targeted for code of conduct violations.

The representatives presented the email they are writing to the University and want to have disbursed, where they propose five things (this email was shared with the GC)

* + 1. A formal written apology
    2. A moratorium on all student conduct cases related to protests
    3. Termination of Dana Broadnax’s employment
    4. A third-party review of the student conduct office
    5. A review of the student code of conduct by a panel comprised of representatives of all affected parties

Elliot noted that a few years ago the GRO was involved in pushing to have the freedom of expression clause included in the code of conduct, and that it is sad to hear that it is not being honoured. He asked the GC to remember that we are all graduate students with similar concerns and issues, to be respectful and stay focused on this issue. Consider what is within the bounds of the GROs mission, and act as you see fit within those bounds.

There was a request to describe the other instances where Dana Broadnax has acted in ways that the representatives found to be problematic. The representatives referred the GC to the addendum they sent to the GC with information regarding Dana Broadnax. They then read aloud the fourth paragraph of their letter – relating to her history at Loyola University of Chicago. It was also noted that how all of the issues are resolved and handled seem to depend on her entirely. There are no policies or guidelines to which we can hold Dana accountable.

**MOTION 1: There is a motion to have the GRO support the students targeted by the administration for hearings by: emailing the graduate student body information about the upcoming rally and supporting the rally.**

**Motion seconded.**

**MOTION 2: There is a motion to have the GRO sign on to the petition provided by the Garland Sit-In organization.  
Motion seconded.**

Comment: It is ridiculous that the students targeted for hearings were all involved in the Sit-in and known to Dana Broadnax. These students are being unfairly targeted.

Comment: last year the GRO voted on making a statement in support of the Sit-In’s ideals last year. Can we find and read aloud what that comment was to the GC?

Comment: there was social media presence about the event that made it seem that the protest was potentially very aggressive. The students undergoing these protests should be cognizant of how they are perceived and how they act and word their statements and protests.

Comment: If the GRO is not supporting these students, we should reconsider how we are acting as an organization. This is a clear instance of students being targeted by the administration and we need to act to support these students

Question: Is Dana Broadnax the only person involved in this?

Answer: There may be a way to have a hearing in front of a student conduct board, however it has not been transparent as to if or how the students will get access to present to such a board rather than to Dana.

Comment: Mike Morell also had a freedom of expression, and that was interrupted by this disruptive event. This feels different to having students protesting outside of the event.

Comment: There is also the issue of the fact that Mike Morell was given an honorarium which was funded by students or tax-payer dollars. In a similar

**There was a friendly amendment to Motion 2 to also include information relating to the vote approved by the GRO last year relating to supporting the Sit-In.** The friendly amendment was accepted, the revised motion now reads

**MOTION 2 (previously seconded): There is a motion to have the GRO sign on to the letter provided by the Garland Sit-In organization, distribute that letter and include information relating to the vote approved by the GRO last year relating to supporting the Sit-In.**

Comment: We should support this motion because what the GRO was advocating for last year was not supported by the University, as these students are still being targeted and have been issued thinly veiled threats relating to their Sit-In activities. Since Dana is going to be the person investigating, charging, trying and punishing them, this is the antithesis of what we demanded as the GRO last year.

Comment: Just to note, this protest was not an official action of the Sit-in group. It was more of a reactive occurrence of international students who felt strongly about this issue.

Comment: It is suggested that we should consider a motion that the GRO should request the University create, approve and formalize procedures to govern and give transparency to prosecuting students for protests.

Comment: We should

Question: Pertaining to the letter: is the version distributed in print the correct one?

Answer: Yes

Comment: Is Johns Hopkins’s grammatically correct?

Answer: Yes – it is a common misconception that it should just be Hopkins’

**MOTION 3: The GRO will work with the authors of the letter to make it explicit that we do not believe that the Graduate students being targeted are not being targeted for their involvement in the sit-in.**

Comment: not all of the students being targeted were offered amnesty last year.

Question: Should the GRO be authoring our own communications rather than forcing changes on another group’s communications?

Comment: It seems that given this discussion, the GRO should be issuing its own letter focusing on how the University has ignored our requests for amnesty, has gone against their own policies on free speech, should have formal policies, et c.

A friendly amendment to Motion 3 is suggested: that the GRO coordinate a statement regarding our perspective on this issue and the concerns we have about. It was accepted.

**MOTION 3 (revised): The GRO will work with the authors of the letter to make it explicit that we do not believe that the Graduate students being targeted are not being targeted for their involvement in the sit-in. The GRO will also coordinate a statement regarding the GROs perspective on the issue and the concerns the GRO has (IE amnesty, policies on free speech, formal policies for conduct violations).**

**The motion is seconded.**

A friendly amendment was proposed that the GRO issued statement be written by the co-chairs and security chair. It was not accepted.

A friendly amendment was proposed that the Co-chairs be in charge of the GRO issued statement. It was accepted.

**MOTION 3 (revised): The GRO will work with the authors of the letter to make it explicit that we do not believe that the Graduate students being targeted are not being targeted for their involvement in the sit-in. The GRO co-chairs will also write a statement regarding the GROs perspective on the issue and the concerns the GRO has (IE amnesty, policies on free speech, formal policies for conduct violations)..**

**The motion is seconded.**

Comment: Signing the letter/petition presented seems to take us beyond being focused on specific issues given the language of the letter and GC members should be urged to consider the letters wording and before voting.

Comment: It is well worth considering how the letter is worded, but overall the content of the letter is pursuant with the discussion here tonight.

Comment/question: We did not really discuss the proposal that Dana Broadnax be fired from JHU. Is that something we feel is appropriate?

Response from the attendees: We always demand more than we expect to get. We do not expect this to occur. However, we do believe that the actions Dana took (including videotaping students sleeping during the Sit-In) are justifiable for termination. We need to hold the administration accountable.

Comment: I do not feel comfortable calling for the termination of employment of someone I have never met, even though I agree with the intention of the material presented.

Comment: Videotaping students sleeping should be sufficient grounds for termination.

Comment: Many other administrators have scapegoated Dana when other issues have arisen. They claim she is responsible for a great deal of the issues we currently face and should be held responsible for her activities.

Comment: Many of the issues we are discussing are institutional in nature. It seems it would be more accurate for the GRO to target its actions against the institution in general, not necessarily against an individual. If an individual is responsible, the institution will recognize that and deal with that individual accordingly.

Comment: We know the individual responsible in this instance and therefore it is appropriate to target that individual.

Comment: The fact-finding committee determined that the University did not have a policy with regards to surveillance and therefore recording students was not against policies. As such, while there may be personal privacy issues at play in that instance, it makes it problematic regarding directly targeting her.

Question: To whom does Dana Broadnax report?

Answer: Dean Ruzika.

Question: Could we just request institution review of Dana’s position?

Comment: We are already calling for review of the institution, and she is essentially in charge of everything so we need to call for her removal. When regimes are flawed, you remove the head of the regime.

Comment

Votes were finally cast on all active motions. For clarity they are repeated below along with vote outcomes:

**MOTION 1 (previously seconded): There is a motion to have the GRO support the students targeted by the administration for hearings by: emailing the graduate student body information about the upcoming rally and by supporting the rally.**

**VOTE: 18 for. 0 against. 8 abstentions.**

**The motion passe**

**MOTION 2 (previously seconded): There is a motion to have the GRO sign on to the letter provided by the Garland Sit-In organization, distribute that letter and include information relating to the vote approved by the GRO last year regarding supporting the Sit-In (specifically pertaining to amnesty).**

**VOTE: 16 for. 6 against. 5 abstain.**

**The motion passes.**

**MOTION 3 (previously seconded): The GRO will work with the authors of the letter to make it explicit that we do not believe that the Graduate students being targeted are not being targeted for their involvement in the sit-in. The GRO co-chairs will also write a statement regarding the GROs perspective on the issue and the concerns the GRO has (IE amnesty, policies on free speech, formal policies for conduct violations, etc).**

**VOTE: 24 for. 3 abstentions.**

**The motion passes.**

1. **Committee Updates [2 min each]**

These updates were skipped due to time restrictions.

* 1. **PhD Advisory Committee to Dr. Nancy Kass (PAC) (Daniel/Elliot)**
  2. **Student Security Advisory Committee (Steph/Sebastian)**

1. **Open Discussion & Questions**

NOTE: The following occurred much earlier in the agenda after the Social Chairs updates, but was included in Open Discussion for recording purposes.

There is a question posed by Elliot: if classes at JHU are cancelled or moved off campus, should the GC continue to meet? Not meeting will have repercussions for events and funding.

There is a question: if we can approve that if classes are cancelled and the GC decides not to meet, can we vote electronically on some matters?

Shane clarifies that yes, we could approve that in advance. We need to be considerate of how the motion is worded to ensure it functions properly.

It was noted that all JHU students have Zoom licenses, so we could set up a GC Zoom meeting. Another speaker noted that some web apps allow for speaking orders to be maintained in case Zoom cannot meet that function.

There was a question if classes are cancelled for a month if we could make the GC meetings weekly after the shutdown is done, rather than biweekly. Daniel added that instead we could have one special meeting that is only voting on business.

Eugenia suggested that we consider explicitly if will we approve electronic voting on the constitution/by-laws.

**MOTION 1: There is a motion that if the university cancels in person classes and on-campus activities, the GC will not meet in person for the duration of those cancellations.**

**The motion is seconded.**

**The motion passes.**

**MOTION 2: There is a motion that if on-campus classes are cancelled, the GC will meet electronically at its regularly scheduled time. If quorum is not met at these online meetings, the GC may conduct votes on pressing matters electronically.**

**The motion is seconded.**

**The motion passes.**

**MOTION 3: There is a motion that we will cancel all GRO-funded social events that would occur during a period where the University is closed (the buildings are locked, classes in person are cancelled but held online, administrators are on campus). We will guarantee reimbursement of funds spent in good faith during planning events that were so cancelled.**

**The motion is seconded.**

**The motion passes.**

There is a question as to whether there is a difference between classes being cancelled and the university being closed. The answer is that yes, there is some difference – one does not necessarily mean that the events are closed.

It was proposed that we start dealing with some contingency plans regarding large events if they are cancelled. We will request that the coordinators of these events do so.

There is a question as to whether we can allow for electronic attendance at future GC meetings even if the University is not closed in case any members are not comfortable attending meetings in person.

**The Co-chairs will investigate means of holding GC meetings with optional online attendance.**

There is a question if we should include something in the By-laws governing what occurs during University shut-downs.

**The secretary will consider and draft something relating to this issue.**

1. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 PM.

**Appendices:**

1. **Advocacy Items with no major status update**
   1. **Changes in Summer and Intersession Course Selection Policies**
   2. **WGS Fellowships**
   3. **GRE Status**
2. **Meetings and Committees Occured and Upcoming**
   1. **Meeting with OIE 03/06**
   2. **Meeting with Laura Stott and Calvin Smith about separate organization support process for graduate-level organizations 03/12**
3. **Committees without an update**
   1. **Provost’s Advisory Team on Healthcare (PATH) (Benj)**
   2. **Wellbeing Working Group (Benj)**
   3. **Suicide Prevention Awareness, Response and Coordination (JH-SPARC) (Ashwini)**
   4. **Provost's Sexual Violence Advisory Committee (SVAC)**
   5. **Parental Concerns Working Group (Benj)**
   6. **Tobacco Cessation Committee (Benj)**
   7. **Student Center Planning Committee (Swetha)**