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From: GRO Co-Chairs Shane Arlington and Conor Bean, [gro@jhu.edu](mailto:gro@jhu.edu)  
Date: 16 July 2020  
Subject: A Welcome to Johns Hopkins from the GRO

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To all incoming KSAS and WSE Graduate Students,

First and foremost, congratulations on joining the incoming class of Blue Jays! Graduate life at Hopkins is a rich and rewarding experience that will shape your life for years to come, and you are joining us at a particularly interesting time. We are your Graduate Representative Organization (or GRO for short), and we want to welcome you to campus and give you a little bit of information about who we are and what we do. The GRO is the primary graduate representative student group on the Homewood campus and consists of a General Council of representatives selected by each department on the Homewood campus, and an Executive Board which is elected by the General Council. Members of GRO act as liaisons between graduate students and the administration, host and support social events, and advocate for graduate student needs and concerns.

You are welcome to attend GRO General Council meetings! These meetings *usually* occur every other Monday at 6PM in the Levering Hall Great Hall. This semester - and possibly this entire year - the meetings will occur online through Zoom instead. More information on registering for the meetings will be sent out before the first meeting in September. Our GGC meetings provide a forum for graduate students to discuss, formulate, and implement policies on any and all issues affecting their welfare. For more information about the GRO we encourage you to check out our website at [gro.jhu.edu](http://gro.jhu.edu) and our [GRO Facebook](#) page. Further, you can join the Facebook group [JHU Homewood Incoming Graduate Students—Fall 2020](#), managed by the GRO's Welcome and Guide Chair. We will be hosting welcome events for incoming students this fall which will be posted to the Facebook group, or feel free to fill out this [Google Form](#) to get updates via email. Further questions on welcome events can be emailed to [welcome.gro.jhu@gmail.com](mailto:welcome.gro.jhu@gmail.com).

The GRO serves as a one-stop-shop for policy, advocacy, and social initiatives on campus. If you have a unique academic problem, idea to improve campus, or event you'd like to plan, contact us! If we can't help you ourselves, we will find someone who can. Ultimately, we want to provide a sense of community for graduate students through the organization of social functions and to support graduate students in need of assistance. Some of our most popular events and resources are:

- A weekly coffee hour (Monday afternoons, 3PM, Levering Lounge )
- A happy hour every other week (Thursday evenings, 6PM, Levering Lounge)
- Off-campus and inter-campus events such as happy hours, game nights, graduate formals, hiking trips, sporting events, scavenger hunts, a summer sports league, etc.
- Monetary grants for graduate students traveling to conferences
- Funding for graduate student events and assisting with new graduate student group formation

With the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these events will be altered for the coming year, but we are committed to providing our graduate community with continued social programming and support, both virtually and in socially-distant settings.

We hope to see you at our events in the coming year(s)!

Sincerely,  
Shane & Conor