



Graduate Representative Organization

GC Meeting Agenda

Date/Time: 18:00 October 25th, 2021

Meeting Location: [Online, Zoom](#)

- I. Call to Order and Agenda Review
 - A. Ona called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm
- II. Approval of minutes from October, 11th 2021
 - A. Alex H *IN TEXT* Motion to approve the minutes from October 11 2021
 1. Tatsat Banerjee (Funding & Admin Chair) and Veronica Wallace (Environmental Health and Engineering) *IN TEXT* second
 2. Yea: 22 Nay: 0 Abstain: 0
 3. The motion passes
- III. E-board Report (Ona & Alex)
 - A. [Reconvening Johns Hopkins University Police Accountability Board](#)
 1. Alex: The accountability board is important because it is under the Community Safety Act that was passed in Maryland General Assembly during the 2019 legislative session. The members are responsible for sharing communicating concerns directly with department leadership, reviewing Police Department metrics and assessing current and prospective department policies, as well as looking at procedures and training in order to provide recommendations for improvement. Accountability Board does require an application and the applicants are selected by a committee which consists of two students from the Committee on Security at Johns Hopkins. The deadline is October, 31. The link is: <https://publicsafety.jhu.edu/jhpd-information/accountability-board/accountability-board-qa/>.
 2. Discussion
Conor: We are still well within the two years' restriction period, but they have taken substantive action. I am curious about how they score that.
 - B. Policy Review
 1. [Linked to Suggest Changes in Conference and Travel Grant Attendance Policy](#)
 - a) Joseph: Essentially, the changes were just to eliminate the requirement for anyone applying for a conference grant need to be from a department that has GRO GC reps. So we need to appeal Part C and Part D. I think it is unfair and keeps people away from applying. I have written a long email and Google doc explain it.
 - b) Discussion:

Michael: I am not fully aware of the GRO history, but is there any reason we are restricting to the Homewood students?

Joseph: Under the constitution, GRO is representing the Homewood division of Hopkins, while other schools have their own student bodies.

Matthew Morgado (Philosophy) *IN TEXT* I feel like the amendments may very well decrease the numbers of GC reps, but the benefits might outweigh that cost (assuming having less GC reps is a cost). Maybe having less GC reps is actually a benefit if only the most dedicated reps remain. Not sure though.

Joseph: I understand the concern and am sure this was the original intent of the policy. But my perspective is that if the mission of GRO is to serve the students, I don't think it's fair for the constituents to be eligible for monetary and fiscal help from the GRO when whether having a GRO Rep may not necessarily be in their control. For smaller departments, they may not have a large student body to serve or be willing to step up.

Matthew: *IN TEXT* Right, that's a good point. Actually, I was a GC rep last year, and I couldn't find any first years to take over for me this year.

- c) Alex: *IN TEXT* Motion to approve the Bylaw changes as outlined by Joseph.
 - (1) Matthew Morgado (Philosophy), Michael Wilkinson (Robotics MSE), Veronica Wallace (Environmental Health and Engineering), and Griffin (Comparative Thought & Literature): * IN TEXT* second
 - (2) Yea: 17 Nay: 0 Abstain:8
 - (3) The motion does not pass.

2. Proposed Changes to Coordinator Positions.

- a) Vittorio: I had three different coordinator positions over the last five semesters, and I've encountered some difficulties and inconsistencies in that time. So I'm proposing these changes to try to make life a little bit better for coordinating with GRO. Coordinators are usually engaged with the GRO putting in as many hours as or in some cases more hours than members of the E-board, but they have less influence than a GC member right now because we don't have the regular vote or make motions. I do agree the coordinator should be separate from the E-board and shouldn't have an E-board vote, but they should have voting and motion rights in GC Meetings. Many of the coordinator positions have been E-board positions in the past. It's not really a question of merit. As for the voting for the average one to do coordinators activity times, this doesn't heavily bloat the voting pool away from majority department votes. And then the other two changes are really tied to this. The first one is that coordinators are usually appointed for a specific job, such as the welcome event. I think when the GC votes to create a coordinator position, there should be a defined start and end date. Along with that, perhaps one that could be extended with a further vote. There should be a tentative start and stop time directly relate to when they can and cannot vote. And then the second one is really to help with ease of communication. When creating a coordinator position, I am proposing that the GC ties the coordinator to a specific E-board position so that the E-board position is responsible for handling communication directly with the coordinator.

Alex: From my point of view, these are all kinds of logical changes - the starting and ending dates for voting and making motions, and more firmly tying them to E-board members. Given the amount of work they do over this time period, I

think it makes sense to get them the right to vote. We will open an discussion period and vote for this in the next GC meeting.

b) Discussion:

Tatsat Banerjee (Funding & Admin Chair): Will coordinators have to attend GC meetings regularly?

Vittorio: GC members are not required, but E-board members are expected to attend.

Matthew Morgado (Philosophy): *IN TEXT* Is there any reason to forbid coordinators from voting? Maybe y'all mentioned one, but I missed it.

Vittorio: I think the main argument against coordinators voting is that they don't represent a department and they are not a member of the E-board.

Matthew: Like it would be less democratic if a non-representing person was voting? Even if it's a cost, I feel like that cost is outweighed by the benefit that a very experienced and involved person's voice is added to the pool, especially if it's just one or two people.

IV. GRO Group Recognition

A. Graduate Student Communication Organization at JHU

1. Aly Hill: I'm a graduate student studying Communication here at JHU, and as an AAP student, as many of those in the main Communication program, our courses are largely online. And one of the things I missed about my in-person undergraduate education was the opportunity to meet with other peers, beyond the classroom the depth of conversations and relationships I was able to have. Looking for other peers that might feel the same, I contacted our Program Coordinator, Dr. Patricia Fernandez, and she connected me with one of our fellow students, Ilia had already begun creating a Slack channel to start organizing all the students into a group, if they wanted to begin to talk outside of the classroom. We wanted to expand upon those opportunities we began developing the Graduate Student Communication Organization, also known as the GE SEO, which is open to all Johns Hopkins University graduate students. Our mission is to empower students with relationships and resources to enhance their academic experience. Organization members will have the opportunity to build relationships with like-minded students and alumni to gain access to academic and professional resources and to attend events to improve their academic and professional development. First, we'll continue slack discussion forum. In this case, we hope students can connect with their peers in the same concentration, and they can learn about communications research publications, job opportunities in the field, as well as in-person and virtual events, and gain insights on program courses. In addition to that, we plan on holding monthly virtual meetings where we'll discuss and plan upcoming events and further network with our peers. Finally, we'll host virtual and in-person events that will feature conversations with communication alumni with faculty, and panel discussions, which will include networking hours for students. As far as our organizational leadership structure goes, we plan on having a co-presidency, a vice president, a director of communications, a secretary, a treasurer, as well as an events coordinator. Each of them will have their own unique roles and responsibilities that will help advance our mission and our organizational activities. We believe communication is an integral part of every field. It's very interdisciplinary. Because of that, we want all students to have the opportunity to act as a group where they can further explore the field and where they can build relationships with their peers.
Ona: Which groups or organizations at Hopkins do you envision collaborating with?

Aly: I don't have a specific answer to that question yet, but I think any student and any other organization could find some benefit with our group because communication is such an interdisciplinary field.

2. Discussion

Tatsat: Is the AAP program considered to be a part of our constituency, even if the program is for all graduate students?

Alex: The head of the organization must be a graduate student of one of the Homewood divisions. AAP program is one of the divisions.

Conor: As of last year, AAP was not counted as a part of Homewood schools due to their funding structure and others. Before voting on this, we may double check with Renee to confirm it.

Ona: To that point, AAP students are not eligible for the election. But this organization can partner with the GRO, because we can help them promote. They can also come to the GC meetings to speak about specific issues.

Alex: *IN TEXT* Voting on whether or not to approve the Graduate Student Communication Organization. We'll hold off for another time to clarify.

B. Pickleball Club at Johns Hopkins University

1. Yoseph Kim: For everyone who's unfamiliar, pickleball is a growing sport that combines elements of tennis and ping-pong. The rules are similar and pickleball can be played in a smaller court within the tennis court, and it can be played with singles or doubles. I used to play tennis a lot, but I ran into knee troubles in high school so that I can't really run or do sudden movements that fast anymore. Pickleballs is a nice sport for me because I can still work on my hand eye coordination while remaining easy on my joints. The mission and purpose for our organization are to provide a venue for all students, especially targeting the graduate student population who are interested in playing, and to promote it in Hopkins, as well as returning to community by attending events or tournaments. We also want to give students an opportunity to build their teamwork skills because pickleball is usually played in doubles.

Dylan (President of the Pickleball Club): Our group structures currently have Yoseph as the Officer and the Treasurer. In the future, we encourage graduate students to attend our practices, and have a Publicity Chair, Vice President, Equipment Chair, and Secretary. We currently have 10 members. We'll have tournaments, I think would be a good collaboration between schools.

Yoseph: The proposed constitution that will happen around the November majority vote. So currently, Johns Hopkins does not have a set pickleball court, but we are in contact with Dave from the athletic department, who has mentioned that they are considering it. Hopefully with a group recognition, we can lobby the recreation center to give us set times and a space to practice. Currently, Dylan and I have been playing for a little bit at free courts away from the campus. We'll primarily use budget for equipment management, transportation for now since we have to go off campus, and other miscellaneous things as needed for the club.

2. Discussion:

Michael Wilkinson (Robotics MSE): *IN TEXT* How are the proper lines currently laid in your current configuration? Is there a space you could leverage at Hopkins with temporary lines?

Yoseph: Usually, you can set up and play on two pickleball courts within one tennis court. It can be played both indoors and outdoors, and we just have to set up our own net, which we propose to cap with the budget. So, we can potentially play indoor at the Rec Center in the basketball courts if we can set lines there.

Amoh Tontoh (Health and Wellness): *IN TEXT* what have your group done to ginger the interest about this game? I think is a great game!

Yoseph: We have been encouraging friends and classmates. We will advertise it and have events.

Veronica: *IN TEXT* Question: Is there anything logistically to plan about reserving time/space in Towson or Cockysville? Is that a limiting factor about whether the group can meet consistently?

Yoseph: We are working on the logistics. Court is our current limiting factor. We can reserve court under the name of JHU, so that JHU could be the name on the insurance, and we will need to pay for the reservation fee.

Michael Wilkinson (Robotics MSE): Have you looked into temporary line options so you can just set up somewhere in Hopkins (tennis courts or gym)? May be more feasible than consistent transport.

Yoseph: We have been contacting with the Rec Center.

John Soltis (physics and astronomy): It's still unclear to me how either of these groups are related to the GRO?

Ona: We formally recognize them by vote.

Michael Wilkinson (Robotics MSE): *IN TEXT* I think they should make setting up at Hopkins the main push with temporary lines for now as opposed to draining funding into transport

3. Veronica: *IN TEXT* Motion to recognize pickle ball club at JHU
 - a) Matthew Morgado (Philosophy): * IN TEXT* second
 - b) Yea: 23 Nay: 0 Abstain: 2
 - c) The motion passes.

V. GRO Funding Requests

A. JHU Aerial Circus Club Funding Request

1. Shannon Bernier: I'm not the official organizer, but I can put you in contact with that person. The aerial circus club goes off campus, to a place called Mobtown ballroom, where they take classes in aerial feeding off the ground circus apparatuses. We just had about 30 new members joined this year and unfortunately, a lot of them are having trouble paying for the classes. So, we're looking for ways to help bring the cost down, Which is why the funding application was submitted. Costs are flat \$20 per person fee that we pay to the Mobtown ballroom instructors, who are all certified aerial circus instructors, and an associated fee with renting Hop vans to transport people to the event, because we are not allowed to perform circus on campus, due to JHU regulations. We request \$800 to bring the cost down to \$10 per person based on the number of people that we've had that cannot afford to go without any financial assistance.
2. Discussion:

Alex: How will the group be attracting the attendance for the events.

Shannon: We distributed the announcements about the event through Campus Groups. We do announce to the Hopkins wide community for people to explore.

Matthew: Will that amount be sufficient?

Shannon: According to our best knowledge, yes. It may still exclude some people, but this is the amount we all agree on.
3. Matthew Morgado (Philosophy) *IN TEXT* Motion to approve funding for JHU Aerial Circus Club.
 - a) Tatsat Banerjee (Funding & Admin Chair): *IN TEXT* Second
 - b) Yea: 19, Nay: 0, Abstain: 3
 - c) The motion passes

B. Pickleball Club Funding Request

1. Yoseph Kim We're proposing to host a pickleball tournament at Johns Hopkins on November 6, which is a Saturday, from around 10am to 2pm. All graduate students are welcome to participate in this free event, regardless of their skill level. We'll give a quick boot camp and then we can set up the teams by level. In the budget we've included food and drinks for players, and prizes. The equipment is within the budget so we're planning to get paddles, balls, and nets. We also have our own personal requirement that we're willing to share. Registration limit is 20 people due to limited amount of space. The budget we are requesting is \$941.4 from the GRO, and we plan to use 95% according to the funding rule. For prizes, we want to provide nice equipment that people can win. We also include the lines and markings for the pickleball court. We did not include transportation in our budget, because we were going to make students can come on their own or carpool. The number 20 It was mainly based on the available space and the time, but from the people in our club, we have 10 people who would be willing to come.
Isaiah: Can you adhere to the COVID restriction of having pre-packaged food?
Yoseph: Yes
2. Matthew Morgado (Philosophy): *IN TEXT* Motion to approve funding for Pickleball Club
 - a) Alexander Helms (Co-Chair) and Veronica: *IN TEXT* Second
 - b) Yea: 23, Nay: 0, Abstain: 2
 - c) The motion passes

VI. Open Discussion & Questions

A. Soliciting Questions on Hopkins PD

1. Michael: In our previous GC discussions we talked about that it seems that Hopkins is going to bulldoze this implementation of the gauge police force forward, even though we would love to have the position of opposing it during this transition period. It might be good to start thinking of if they are going to do it, what are the best ways we can make sure that the implementation is equitable and fair for everyone. I mentioned that I come from University of Alabama, and they have had a private police force for a very long time. I personally often noticed that the private police would be significantly better than the local police force because the agendas and objectives were very different. So, in getting guidance for what the Hopkins PD could look like versus Baltimore PD currently looks like. I reached out through my various connections and got in touch with the chief of the UAPD, the campus police force at University of Alabama. I will be talking with him tomorrow evening. I just gave some of his stats here, so you guys know that he's accomplished in this field. One thing that I liked is that he worked with the way drug court and Collegiate Recovery Services at EMI, which is about actual helping and finding ways to have a path to recovery that doesn't just involve jail time, instead of just arresting students who have possible drug addictions and charges giving them, which would be typically the modus operandi of the Tuscaloosa PD. He wants to discuss our concerns about private police in the universities, especially when police are calling from a city or county PD system which might be the case at Hopkins and was one of the main concerns that we had. I gave some example bullet points that we could discuss with him but I wanted to open up to the floor, about what things that you guys would find useful to ask someone who is very high up in a police department like him and what they thought would be helped by what was or wasn't successful.
2. Discussion:
Jo Giardini (they/them, English): There's a lot of confusion here about what exactly some of the prior concerns about the police force was. It was not purely restricted to whether it

was a private versus public Police Department, nor was it restricted to interactions with students, with the police force, but rather what/how the police force will then interact between Johns Hopkins and the wider community. I'm quite concerned about the final framing of this question what we want from the Hopkins PD. I understand that there is desire to be working with the administration as that is still being considered, but we're still within the pause period. I'm also very wary of doing any sorts of work on this now when there is still a pause officially within the university on the formation of the police force for effectively doing the university's work during this two-year period if we're beginning to solicit ideas about how the police force will function. I would suggest that before we turn to outside sources to discuss the formation of such police forces, we should talk with professors at the university who are scholars of policing in America and solicit their views on how these things work. I worry that talking with someone who is a current chief of police forces going to give us irredeemable bias. We currently have two globally recognized scholars of policing, Stuart Schrader, and Elsa Weaver, who are faculty members at our university. Why not talk to them before we begin going to outside sources in the most biased way possible.

Michael: I'll first answer any just confusions on the terminology I've been using. By private I mean the police is university-based, as far as the jurisdiction. Though I think that we should keep our position, opposing the police force, I found that we have seen Hopkins take very direct action with the approval of the new PD during the pause. And I do not believe that my discussion with this person is going to be an end all. I think we should leverage all sources. So, just as there will inevitably be bias from this officer, he is also someone who exists within the realm of this system, and has worked with students through policing for a very long time, which is the reason I put down his credentials to not give the idea that he's just a cop, who is automatically on the backside of the police. I know that that doesn't answer all the points but that was just my main points on it. And this conversation doesn't have to be me representing the GRO in any way. This can just be me having a discussion with this person in having future comments in GRO meetings if that's the concern as well. But I wanted to give people the opportunity to raise questions that they would have for this person to inform our decisions in the future.

Conor: I am mostly worried about the framing of this being a done deal. I am also worried about taking back those opinions as our future projections.

Michael: I am just having preparation for future.

Jo: I think it is better to talk to people in Baltimore.

Michael: I treat this as another source of information.

VII. Elections

A. Diversity Chair

1. Position Description:

- a) Improve diversity (defined as broadly as the candidate would like) among graduate students, within departments/faculty as well as in the General Council
- b) Apart from developing projects in the realm of the GRO, willingness to serve on various committees across the university is required
- c) Be paid for no more than 25 hours per academic year

2. Nominees:

- a) Ajita Kandula

3. Result of the election:

- a) Ajita Kandula was elected as the Health & Wellness Chair

VIII. Adjournment

A. The meeting adjourns at 7:36 pm.