



Graduate Representative Organization GC Meeting Agenda

Date/Time: 18:00 PM ET Jan 23rd, 2023

Hybrid: Mergenthaler 111/ [Zoom](#)

I. Call to Order and Agenda Review

A. The meeting is called to order at 6:07 PM.

II. EBoard Reports (Ali & Michael):

A. Voting and General Onboarding Reminder

The FYI slides will be attached with the meeting agenda document and it can be used for reference purposes.

a. For GC meetings:

- For all GC meetings, a valid quorum requires the presence of one member more than half of the active membership of the GC.
- To be eligible to receive conference grant funding, applicants must belong to a department who has been actively participating in the GRO GC over the past year, defined herein as having a departmental representative who attended at least half of the GC meetings during the semester prior to the application period. In this case for Spring Semester, it'll be 3 out of 7 meetings.

Meeting dates for the upcoming semester:

GRO EBoard:

1. Jan 17th
2. Jan 30th
3. Feb 13th
4. Feb 27th
5. Mar 13th
6. Mar 27th
7. April 10th
8. April 24th

GRO GC:

1. Jan 9th - Special Election
2. Jan 23rd
3. Feb 6th
4. Feb 20th

5. Mar 6th
6. Mar 20 - spring break no meeting
7. April 3rd
8. April 17th

b. Voting logistics

- *Michael*: So to clarify the form is just for recording info, because we're creating like a public facing, voting document that we approve like a while ago, the actual votes will either be like in person and raise your hand or like type it in the chat so you're not using this form to make the votes but you're using it for later preservation purposes.
- *Ali*: Every agenda item will have a voting ID and to give an idea of what we are doing. On the excel sheet, the results can be viewed with Yay, nay or abstain depending on what department you're in. Make sure only one GC rep votes and not two or more. As it'll just count as one vote.
- **Secret ballot voting**
- *Ali*: And then we have the secret ballot voting okay which will be used during the time of elections since we won't be using the same voting system. There'll be speeches given by the candidates and one of the co chairs will be serving as the voting official and the votes will be sent to them. When it's in person, a piece of paper will be used which might be collected by the secretary or co-chair. When it's online, make sure you don't put your official vote in public. When the time comes, it'll be reiterated.

B. GC orientation:

- *Heramb*: Hello everyone, I'm Heramb Gupta and I'm the Graduate Involvement chair. Basically, one of my responsibilities is to coordinate with the department reps of the general council. If there are any problems, you can get back to me or email me.
- The general council is made up of two parts: Department Reps and Executive Board. Every department gets at least one or two representatives each. The second part is the executive board members, they are the ones who organize events and act as a connection between the students and the organization.

Notes:

- Quorum: "presence of one member more than half of the active membership of the GC"
- Agenda: All members of the GC can submit an item to the agenda. Students can also do the same.
- Motion: Agenda to be discussed in detail. Has to be seconded and then voted.
- Note: "If there are multiple GC representatives of a department present in a meeting, only one representative may vote."
- GROUP FUNDING: "GRO supports many other student organizations by financially supporting their events". "The GRO General Council reserves the right to vote on all funding requests in excess of \$250"
- *Heramb*: The agenda can be modified and something which includes something you want to personally discuss with everyone or things you think should be discussed in the meeting.

In terms of votes, irrespective of the number of representatives- the vote will be one for each department.

- Gro supports other organizations financially, the funding chair will look into the event details and if the amount is more than 250 dollars, the GC will vote on it and a representative will come and do a presentation. The GC can ask questions and decide whether to approve the funding request or not. When it's less than 250 dollars, the executive board has the right to decide on it.
- *Michael*: We have one group funding request today.

- Details on Focus Group Discussions:
 1. The Graduate Involvement Chair will be hosting Focus Group Meetings:
 2. Means for the GC to better put forward their concerns and opinions about specific matters so that we can target them accurately
 3. There shall be 2 sections in every discussion: (i) Group Discussion (ii) One-on-one discussion
 4. The topics of the same will be decided depending upon the suggestions given by the GC. The topics will be collected beforehand and pre-informed.
 5. Once/ Twice per week - variable timings
 6. Participation is voluntary
- *Haremb*: The meetings will be once or twice per week depending on the number of topics I have. Unfortunately, we didn't have many last semester since the GC didn't have anything to discuss. Please note that the participation is voluntary. No attendance criteria is there. The Hampden Shuttle route was also initiated during one of the focus group discussions.

III. Approval of [1/09/2023 Minutes](#)

- a. *Unknown*: Motion to approve the 01/09 meeting minutes
 - i. *Unknown*: seconded
 - ii. Yea: 31, Nay: 0, Abstain: 1
 - iii. The motion is passed

A. Meet your EBoard

- *Michael*: Folks join us between the fall and the spring so there are links to the website where you can see all of us.

The details of the new e-board members can be found on the GRO website. There are also different committees that can be viewed and the GRO representatives under each committee are mentioned.

B. GRO E-board Report: Recap of 1/17/23 Meeting

- We will be hosting a set of welcome events for new Spring grad students (Heramb)
- Conference grant lottery winners have been selected and informed (Mihir/Kefan)
- Looking at new Spring Formal Venue that can accommodate more students (Louise)
- GC food will be coming to the next meeting!
- Health and Wellness events in the works! (Bianca) Multi-cultural events in the works (Soumya)
- Union Election is 9am - 1pm and 4pm-8pm on Monday the 30th and Tuesday the 31st, go out and vote !
- Note: Even if you're not aware about the Union election, talk to someone and make an informed decision while voting.

C. Updates from Meeting with GRO Advisors

Any major concerns that the students have with respect to JHU student life will be raised to the advisors and discussed about.

1. General information regarding GRO advisors:
 - Christine Kavanagh, <christinekavanagh@ihu.edu>, Associate Vice Dean WSE
 - Renee Eastwood, <rseit5@ihu.edu>, Assistant Dean KSAS
 - Laura Stott, <Irstott@ihu.edu>, Executive Director of Student Engagement
 - Megan Barrett, <mbarrett@jhu.edu>, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs WSE
2. Recent Discussion points:
 - Working on Hampden Shuttle Route with Transportation Office (Success!!)
 - Working with Public Safety, Transportation, etc. for better lighting, funding more shuttle routes, etc.

- Setting up Feb 20th @ 6pm meeting with Dean Ed for WSE GC and EBoard members
- General EBoard/budget logistical issues

D. Updates from Transportation Office Meeting

- Hampden shuttle up and running from 7am - 11am weekdays If ridership is high (-32 a day) then time may be extended or evening route can be added.
- Transloc has been updated to include important numbers to call for issues for given routes.
- Working with office on JHMI issues regarding missed stops- they plan on hiring a data analyst
- Extending BlueJay nightride in winter to be earlier in day (4:30 pm as opposed to 6pm) is very expensive (>\$300,000) so would require major funding

Michael: You send us emails, send those actual screenshots or whatever about, you know, issues that you're having.

E. Food at next GC Meeting: Fill out In-Person Availability Survey

- *Michael:* It'll help us get the head count in terms of determining how much food needs to be ordered.
 - i. <https://forms.gle/3BQaHUoMtZCM6mUL6>

IV. Group Funding Request

A. Modern Languages and Literatures, German Section

1. Details:

- Event name; SP23 MLL German Graduate Student Conference: Race and Antiracism in the German Cultural Sector
- Description: Hosted by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures and with a keynote presentation from Dr. Natasha A. Kelly, our conference explores the deeply structural roots of racism that permeate philosophy, education Millis Erwachen (Millis Awakening) with English subtitles, followed by our keynote presentation, which will also be in English.
- Location and Date: Scott-Bates Commons, March 10-12th, 2023
- Audience: All graduate students and faculty are welcome to the event.
- Overall budget estimation: \$5000-7000
- Funding request amount from GRO: \$1000

2. Discussion

- *Michael:* I'll ask you first couple of questions. If that's Okay? So the first one being budget comes up to like 5 to 7 K, which is a lot. Where like? What is that going towards specifically? The 5-7k range..
- *Unknown:* The base expense is for the speaker (Natasha A.Kelly). She is quite interdisciplinary and she released a book in 2021 focusing on anti-racism in the Black German and European American context. The primary expenses will be 2000\$ and we'll be reimbursing her travel as well. It's not international travel. She'll be in the United States coming from Colorado she has an engagement at Colorado College. Her room and board will be around 1500\$. Then, we are also looking at expenses for catering for 2 or 3 days depending on how many people we end up inviting. We've received around 10 responses for our call for papers. We'll be hoping for an audience of one to 200. We also need to reserve a room and for that now we have to pay 240\$.... Of course, posters that would go around to different departments so we have printing and design calls. So we have to also be aware of, and I think, including room and board. Also the flight from Colorado for around 700\$.
- *Michael:* My second and last question. So it's a 3 day event, ideally so, I imagine one of those days like, what is basically, the differences in the days like, what's happening on the different days like that isn't necessarily specifically like that keynote...

- *Unknown*: The first day will involve screening, So it will be more of a half day event. We're thinking of starting around 5 Pm and then going until 7 Pm. The second day we would move on to our Round Table discussion, where Doctor Kelly would actually host her keynote followed by another round table from different academics and interdisciplinary fields made up of scholars at Hopkins and outside Hopkins. After catering there'll be presentations with a 4 person panel and then a 3 person panel on the last day.
 - *Unknown*: So do I have to pay something in order to attend the event since there's catering and do I have to attend all 3 days?
 - *Unknown*: There's no no obligation to attend all of the events. It is a 3 day, but anyone is welcome to attend for part, for all of the panels.
 - *Michael*: Any more questions?
 - *Unknown*: Oh, yeah. Hi, I was just curious. You said the budget for the airline from Colorado to here was 700. I was just curious. What airline is that?
 - *Unknown*: Thanks. We haven't actually booked the flight yet. It's actually just an estimation we have since she wants an reimbursement.
- a. *Unknown*: Motion to approve the group funding request
- i. *Unknown*: seconded
 - ii. Yea: 28, Nay: 0, Abstain: 4
 - iii. The motion is passed

V. Budget Presentation (Esther)

1. Current budget conditioned to the spendings made today:
 - *Esther*: We are underspending our Student Programming budget and slightly over spending our GRO Coffee Hour budget. The GPSA week funding can make up for the coffee hour budget in the future. 10K was taken away from our GSI budget in order to pay the offset for the last spring formal. We are also slightly short for our payroll budget but that can be made up with the office budget.
2. Q&A
 - *Unknown*: How is the budget determined? Comments on the conference fundings
 - *Esther*: At the end of each spring, the Co-chairs and the Treasurer reviews how they spent their budget in the previous years and come up with an amount for how much a day requires, in accordance with which the current budget will be decided. For the main account, we have 91.8k in our main account which has been split into diff sub-categories. The conference fundings has been approved by the funding chair. The conference fundings has already been submitted to the system but it has not been updated in the excel sheet. There is a difference between the group fundings and conference fundings. A part of the group fundings is from the ticket sale of last year's spring formal and conference.

VI. Discussion of Conference Grant Attendance Requirement

1. Discussion:
 - *Michael*: Okay, so our last big discussion for today. And this is the topic of discussion over the past couple of years. Now, basically, we kinda did the intro at the beginning. But in order for your department to be eligible for a conference grant for the students, you, as a rep have to attend half of the meetings in a given semester. This has been a point of contention, and understandably so, for a lot of reps, because there's a side of it that I think a lot of other people, don't like where it's that it's almost kind of like a punitive system right of like we don't allow your students to receive our grand if you're not showing up. So there's that punitive system which I personally never a fan of punitive systems like much prefer like rewarding based systems.

- *Unknown*: If this didn't exist I wouldn't show up or I wouldn't even like be part of the GC. which is unfortunate and like I don't want a punitive reason to be the reason why reps are showing up, and I've been talking with a lot of like Reps, one on one about like ways that we can make the system better such that it doesn't feel like a punitive measure has to be the reason people show up. But that's just like the reality of why this was important.
- *Michael*: I'm also curious as to what alternative solutions to this system would be. But yeah, I'll just kind of open it up to folks, and hear what you'll have to say
- *Morganne*: *IN TEXT* I think the requirement is fine, as long as there is clarity over how attendance is taken and the option to see your department's attendance. Both have been greatly improved since the fall!
- *Kathryn*: I think there's a broader problem here: how many grad students in this university feel that the overall work of the GRO is valuable for them vs. how many graduate students need conference funding and/or are struggling financially in general and therefore need their departments to be eligible?
- *Michael*: So I think Katherine makes a really good point here and I think this is something that, like Ali and I discussed a lot about and like I've talked with all the rest of that right of like, what is the value and the work of the dro besides, just like approving budgeting stuff and conference grants and stuff like that and that's why, we talk about things like the Hampden shuttle route. For example, one of the committees that parental concerns is working that was completely generated from GC. Folks coming together wanting something like that. So there's a lot of things we can do and we can push forward. That isn't just approving funding. And you know, social events and things like that and we've been trying really hard to do that for these past semesters. But I would like to continue to see efforts for that. But next meeting, we're basically just gonna do like in a 20 min just open to session with the GC. Where would you like to see the GRO go? What are some of the initiatives that you would like to see us take on as a group?
- *Michael*: I think Catherine also speaks to, and the unfortunate situation in a lot of departments, not properly funding their students for conferences, and then they have to reach out to sort of resources like us, which we can't control unfortunately, about which I would argue the union helps with stuff like that. As that's a separate personal argument. But yeah, I think I think especially because personally, the reality is, there are 5 to 6 conference grants given out each lottery right? So the amount of students actually receiving these grants is not more than there are. Even Gc members, right? So to create this kind of punitive system that queues your department because less it to me, it doesn't really make sense. The only reason we've kept it is because that's just what was voted on and approved in the past, and people haven't really wanted to turn it over or even alternatives to turning it over. So, yeah, that's kind of why, yes.
- *Michael*: There's so those kind of the 2 debates there's do we do a punitive versus a rewarding or neutral system and if we do stick with a punitive system, we want to keep the same unit of system. Or do we want to transition it to something else?
- *Unknown*: Yeah, I think that's a great point. I would welcome other folks to chime in on that you know, the students have a good experience, and so, having something like that would probably end up creating motivation. So at the end of the day it's going to be about, how much do you want to do in these meetings?
- *Michael*: The system should be the solution for recruiting more departments, but part of it is a part of the utility. It also served in a weird way, recruiting department reps, and I think we need to either do better.
- *Michael*: So there is a website for the lottery system with the documentation, if you go to the GRO website and documents and policies, there is like a whole conference grant policy outlining that. But if there are clarifications that you think still need to be added to that document. Please let us know, and we will continue to act on.
- *Unknown*: I guess my question is just if we have to have a punitive system in order to get attendance. Why should the GRO exist?

- *Michael*: I would agree, you know. We would like to encourage the GC members to put forward their issues and reach out as much as possible.
- *Heramb*: That is one of the reasons why we started focus group discussions to hear about your progress. We are providing you ways to reach out to the GC in terms of mailing and one on one discussions.
- *Unknown*: We could go back to doing it. Basically, asking a summary from the GC reps like what they're working on and mailing it as a GRO update to their constituents. To just understand if there are other things that people want you to focus on.
- *Unknown*: Feels more like a punitive thing, might not actually bring any value as it puts pressure and people might just do it for the sake of it.
- *Heramb*: It's optional and wouldn't be something that's mandatory and in the past it felt like an obligation which is why we stopped it. So if one wants to do it now voluntarily, they can.
- *Unknown*: But I like that one and I think it's important to be careful on wording and communication with this. Don't make it, you know, make it an expert thing, prepared like, help us do it right, help us do it.
- *Unknown*: We will do it. So we have templates for that.
I have a bunch of them. I also have a bunch of my old ones, save so what we'll do in this meeting is we'll sign all the GC members like a template for that, and then, just as we get closer to the end of the month we'll send a reminder. Okay, so not to diverge too much from the original topic.
- *Unknown*: So far, the 2 options that have been laid out on the table are to hang on through this system until the spring, maybe do a poll reassess, or we have confidence in where we're going so that we can just abolish this and continue forward and maybe reassess if issues arise.
- *Unknown*: So if we vote to abolish the system now and if we are never able to reach the quorum later. How do we bring back the rule?
- *Michael*: So, yeah, I I do worry about that. And I think if it got to the point where we were like, consistently not having or am, I would step in as a co chair or the e-board could step into at least for that meeting amend the rules, and then you know figuring it, out there, yeah,
- *Unknown*: You need people to vote to change the system, but we don't have enough people to vote to change the system
- *Unknown*: Do you need to pass a new bylaw or we may or may not pass that too effectively.
- *Michael*: So we can pass that explicitly. It could also be just an implicit like there's a lot of just kind of like implicit powers of the board to do these kinds of things, but if that is a concern, and that we do that we want that like explicitly, in writing we can. We can, right? Yeah. But that will run afterwards.
- a. *Unknown*: We have a motion on keeping the current system until the end of the semester, and just reassessing IP
 - i. *Unknown*: seconded
 - ii. Yea: 21, Nay: 3, Abstain: 6
 - iii. The motion is passed

VII. Open Discussion & Questions

- *Unknown*: Hi! I have one real quick. It's nothing crazy. I just had someone in my department submit a request for group funding, and she'd like to present it at the next meeting. So I just want to make sure that is there anything else I need to do? She submitted the online request form. She hasn't heard back from anyone.
- *Michael*: Gotcha. Okay, I would tell her to just follow up with the funding chair and also make sure to CC the email just in case and make sure to follow up if the funding is delayed and getting back. I know they're still like they're processing a lot of payments. So that just might be. I will make sure those follow up at the very least.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. *Michael*: Motion to adjourn the meeting
 - i. *Unknown*: seconded
 - ii. Yea: 28, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
 - iii. The motion is passed

The meeting was adjourned at 7:44pm.

IX. Voting Details

Voting Motion ID	35	36	37	38	39	40
Motion	To approve 1/9 meeting minutes	To approve the group funding request	Continuing with the current system in terms of attendance	To adjourn the meeting at 7:44 pm		
Anthropology	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Applied Mathematics & Statistics (AMS)	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
History of Art	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea		
Biology	Yea	Yea	Abstain			
Biomedical Engineering (BME)						
Biophysics	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering	Yea	Yea	Abstain	Yea		
Chemistry	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Civil Engineering						
Classics	Abstain	Yea	Nay	Yea		
Cognitive Science	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea		
Computer Science						
Economics	Yea	Abstain	Yea	Yea		
Electrical & Computer Engineering (ECE)						
Engineering Management	Yea	Yea				
English	Yea	Yea	Abstain	Yea		
Environmental Health and Engineering (formerly DOGEE)	Yea	Abstain	Yea	Yea		
EPS (Earth and Planetary Sciences)	Yea	Yea	Yea			
Modern Languages and Literatures (Formerly GRLL)						
History						
History of Science and Technology						
Comp Thought and Literature	Yea	Yea	Abstain	Yea		
Information Security Inst						
Materials Science & Engineering	Yea	Abstain	Yea	Yea		
Mathematics						
Mechanical Engineering	Yea	Abstain	Abstain	Yea		
Near Eastern Studies (NES)	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Philosophy						
Physics and Astronomy	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Political Science	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Psychological and Brain Sciences	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Sociology						
Writing Seminars						
Robotics	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Co-Chair 1	Yea	Yea	Abstain	Yea		
Co-Chair 2	Yea	Yea				

Secretary	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Treasurer	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Admin & Funding		Yea	Yea	Yea		
Social 1						
Social 2	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Advocacy 1	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Advocacy 2						
Communications						
Diversity	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Graduate Involvement Chair	Yea	Yea	Yea	Yea		
Intercampus Chair	Yea		Yea	Yea		
E-sports coordinator						
Health & Wellness	Yea	Yea				
Security Concerns Chair						
Yea	31	28	21	28	0	0
Nay	0	0	3	0	0	0
Abstain	1	4	6	0	0	0