



Graduate Representative Organization GC Meeting Agenda

Date/Time: 18:00 PM ET Feb 6th, 2023

Hybrid: Mergenthaler 111/ [Zoom](#)

Meeting Agenda:

- I. **Call to Order and Agenda Review**
 - a. The meeting is called to order at 6:05 PM.
- II. **Approval of [1/23/2023 Minutes](#)**
 - a. *Heramb*: Motion to approve 1/23 meeting minutes
 - i. *Unknown*: Second
 - ii. Yea: 36, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
 - iii. The motion has been approved
- III. **EBoard Reports (Ali & Michael):**
 - A. Updates from 1/31/23 EBoard Meeting
 1. Updates from Meeting with GRO Advisors
 - Setting up regular meetings with upper level admin (Vice Provosts, President Daniels, etc.)
 - Working with Public Safety, Transportation, etc. for better lighting, funding more shuttle routes, etc.
 - Setting up Feb 20th meeting at 6 pm with Dean Ed for WSE GC and Eboard members
 - Setting up meetings with the Rec center leadership (Feb 8th @1 pm)
 - General EBoard/budget logistical issues
 - Next GC meeting set up for **Tuesday Feb 21st at 6 pm**
 - B. Monthly Transportation Office Meeting Scheduled
 - C. Meeting with Rec Center scheduled for Tuesday
 - D. Reminder about meeting with Dean Ed 6pm Feb 20th
 1. GC Meeting moved to Tuesday Feb 21st
The logistics of the venue is still being figured out, if there's no room available then the meeting will happen online.
- IV. **Group Funding Request**
 - A. Near Eastern Studies Department -Stephanie Cooper

- Near Eastern Studies Department annual lecture planned and executed solely by the graduate students of the department
- Open to all graduate students (open to all students and the public)
- Twofold purpose:
 - To bring in an early to mid-career scholar (up-and-coming ideas)
 - To share the scholarship of Near Eastern Studies with undergraduate and graduate students in other departments -Rotates among the four majors/tracks of their program
- Partly funded by the GRO for at least the past decade, perhaps longer (She was unable to obtain the exact information from their dept. in time)
- The reception allows for networking among grad students in other departments as well as with their invited speaker.
- Keynote Speaker- Dr. Joseph Lam
- Funding amount requested from GRO: 1000 dollars
- The Turkey earthquake disaster will also be addressed with respect to funding and aid.
- Approximate date: March 15th

Discussion

- *Michael*: I'm kind of curious what, historically, has been the turnout ? And then, like what proportion of that turnout has been folks outside of your department?
 - *Stephanie*: I don't have extreme numbers for you, but I do have 2019 records. The lecture attendance was 45, and the dinner or reception dinner attendance was 38 that year. I feel like that went down because sometimes people have things to do afterward. But the other reason that year the lecture was held in one building, and the reception was held in another, and for some reason you kind of lose people when that happens, whereas this year we've actually secured the entire room in Gilman for the lecture and the reception so I feel like it'll be easier to have people come to the reception afterwards. As for a breakdown, I don't have that information for you from being there in 2019, which, granted, was my first year here, I would say that it was probably ..it's over 50%. But maybe just under 2 thirds. So maybe like 60%, we're from our department. But there were definitely people from the public there and then there were people from the history of art and the classics departments. Possibly also that year from philosophy. There were just a handful of people that were interested, that were from other departments, but I would say it's probably just 50% or under 50, maybe more like 40%.
- a. *Unknown*: Motion to approve the group funding request
- Unknown*: Second
 - Yea: 37, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
 - The motion has been approved

B. Anthropology (Jiwon)

- Residue/Reservoir - Graduate student Conference
- Time and Location: 15th and 16th April 2023, Homewood Campus and hosted virtually on Zoom
- Tentative Schedule: 5 panels, Keynote speech, 4 meals (including Reception)
- Keynote Speaker: Matthew T. Huber (Professor at Syracuse University)
- Diverse Themes: Experimentation, Potentiality, Alternative, Uneasy Citizenships, Diasporas, Migrations and Belongings, Nostalgia, etc.
- Participants: Open to all JHU students and Faculty
- Funding amount requested from GRO: 1000 dollars

Discussion

- *Michael*: Where will the money be spent if the funding is approved?

- *Unknown*: It will be mostly spent for the Keynote speaker, AV/Room rentals and travel grants.
 - *Michael*: Can you tell us a little more about the schedule and the duration?
 - *Unknown*: We still haven't finalized the schedule and are still in process of confirming the Keynote Speaker. The conference will start at 10:30 am in the morning and will go on till late afternoon. We are also planning to reserve a seminar room which will incur costs as well.
 - *Mihir*: How many attendees will be there?
 - *Unknown*: The rough capacity of the room is ideal for 70 people.
 - *Heramb*: Will the students be charged anything to attend the conference?
 - *Unknown*: No, Of course not.
- a. *Unknown*: Motion to approve the group funding request
- i *Unknown*: Second
 - ii. Yea: 37, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
 - iii. The motion has been approved

V. Funding for the Spring Formal (Louise)

- Request funds: \$20,000 from GSI budget
- Invited schools (tentative): Homewood, Peabody and School of Education, maybe School of Nursing (with \$1500-2400 financial contribution)
- Venue options: The Engineers Club (Capacity of 500); 1840s Plaza (Capacity of 600)
- Ticket allocation: 80% of tickets will be reserved for Homewood graduate students, 20% of tickets will be divided up among other invited schools
- Cost Breakdown for the formal Venue: \$10,000 to 12,500
- Food and alcohols: \$25,000 to 30,000 DJ, Photography, Musicians, others: \$2,000-3,000
The rest of expenses will be covered by the revenues from ticket sales
- **Note**: The school of medicine has their own formals and they didn't include us so we aren't including them. Peabody and School of Education don't have their own student organizations to conduct events. School of Nursing students might be allowed as well if they are willing to contribute financially.
- Further splitting of 20% ticket allocation for different schools will be done based on the funding ratios.
- Ticket costs around 35-40 dollars per person
- 1840s Plaza is a bigger venue so it makes sense to pay more.
- Time: 8pm-12 pm
- Date: For 1840s Plaza -April 22nd, For Engineer's Club- April 1st

Discussion

- *Unknown*: Any idea when you'll decide on the venue?
 - *Louise*: Very soon.
 - *Mihir*: Food and drinks are included in the ticket cost?
 - *Louise*: Yeah, they are.
 - *Mihir*: Will there be a separate tab for Homewood students to purchase the tickets?
 - *Louise*: Yeah there will be a separate one where it'll be indicated that it's for Homewood students.
- a. *Caleb*: Motion to approve the Intercampus Spring Formal funding request
- i *Unknown*: Second
 - ii. Yea: 35, Nay: 0, Abstain: 1
 - iii. The motion has been approved

VI. Focus Group Meeting Updates (Heramb)

1. Suggestions and Concerns for Ralph S. O'Connor Center

The Department Representatives mentioned the following concerns about the rec center:

- Extreme Crowding in the gym during peak hours which lead to long waiting time for equipment leading to a gym accessibility issue.
- Equipment Down Time: There have been some machines which have been out of order for months. The repair and maintenance of gym equipment should be done on a regular basis.
- Facility Availability Schedule: Although the facility and field schedule is regularly updated it needs JHU Network Access because of which students cannot look at the schedule when at home.
- Squat Rack Safety Issue: The squatting racks are placed extremely close to each other. This leads to a safety issue of hitting against the adjacent rack especially while loading and unloading the weights.
- Group Fitness Room Light Issue: If the group fitness rooms are simultaneously being used and one of the groups needs their lights to be turned off it leads to the other groups to work out in the dark as well because of the electric connections.
- The benches are also too close and there is no space for resting or stretching and it's too small where 5 or more people are stretching.

Ideas and Solutions:

- A large number of the above problems will be addressed if the Rec Center Management reorganizes their group fitness rooms and schedule to make sure there is more space for rearranging the gym equipment along with making sure that all fitness programs run smoothly as well. Additional efforts include buying more gym equipment to reduce student wait time.
- It is recommended that such issues be immediately reported by the students at the Rec Center Front Desk (especially if it is a safety concern). In addition to this the GRO Executive Board has also approached the Rec Center Management to meet with us. We shall voice the above-mentioned concerns to them.
- The meeting is on Wednesday and the issues will be addressed.

2. Steps to promote Department Representation in the General Council

- The concern which was discussed in the previous GC meeting about attendance led to a discussion that the work the GRO does should be incentive enough for the Department Reps to attend and participate in the event.
- In addition to this Department Reps felt like the GC Reps were just present to cast vote i.e. to approve or disapprove various discussions and actions.
- If there is a summary document provided to all the GC Reps about the happenings of the GRO for a month (or any agreed upon time period) then it will be easier for the GC Reps to pass along that document to the students of their department thus promoting more communication between the GC Department Rep as well as the graduate student body. Gabriel volunteered to do it.

Ideas and Solutions:

- To include the Department Reps in actively working towards the solutions i.e. delegating tasks to Department Reps. An example would be the summary which was suggested to be given to the Department Reps does not have to be written by an Executive Board Member. It can be written by a Department Rep who wishes to volunteer along with an Executive Board Member.
- Forming Committees for specific tasks. For example, forming a Financial (or Group Funding Committee). The committee will consist of a subset of volunteering department representatives and the executive board. This committee will meet with the groups separately and decide if they want to fund the given event. Seeing that most of the group funding requests are approved this will ensure that the GC meeting time goes down significantly, which also provides time to discuss more important issues at hand.

- *Michael*: I can provide some feedback on it. The only issue I have is making a GC financial committee, you're now putting the pressure on those very small group of people, and then like, if people don't, the more and more people that drop out that subordinate the more and more you're getting the burden on like a very small handful of people to do all of those as opposed to like, you know also part of the nice thing about Gc is people across the aisle and ask my question. I don't think I know it's been a while, but we certainly have like Nay votes, and like very like so I think that's my concern with it.
- *Heramb*: Let me make it so. This was like just a suggestion which Gabriel came up with which I put forward. We can think about different ways to tackle the problem, and we can. So Gabriel actually wanted to summarize and maybe talk more about it. Another issue is that the image of the GRO is that we conduct a lot of social events. But the fact that we're taking more initiatives to address student concerns isn't being advocated properly. One idea I came up with was to make the student suggestion and idea form.

VII. GRO Student Suggestion and Idea (GSSI) Form (Heramb)

- The Executive Board plans to circulate a GRO - Student Suggestion and Idea Form which will be open throughout the semester. The form aims to provide Graduate Students at the Johns Hopkins University with a means to directly voice their ideas, opinions, and/or concerns. There will be an option of filling in this form anonymously. In addition to this it was also suggested that a form be circulated at the end of every semester (or year) asking about overall student experience.
 - To better promote the GRO and its work, the GRO to be present at Department Orientations preferably with the Department Rep to talk briefly to the new incoming students.
 - The form will be marketed through all platforms even through our signatures and it will be open 24/7.
- a. *Unknown*: Two motions to approve the GSSI form
- Unknown*: Second
 - Yea: 36, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
 - The motion has been approved

VIII. **TRU Union Election Successful: Where do we go from here? (Emily Helm)**

- *Emily*: But I was just curious. Yeah, what? What will our role be as Gc. Reps? And I know there's a lot that needs to be figured out in the next few weeks.

Key takeaways

- TRU-UE is an officially recognized elected unit for PhD students at JHU, where the counting process will soon be finalized and only certain agendas are represented. The GRO will discuss Masters students while TRU-UE is part of the bargaining team and sits within the administration. However, the composition of the representative group is still unclear and contract negotiations may take up to half a year, during which GRO can continue. Despite this, PhD students are encouraged to get involved with TRU as the bargaining unit can use individual feedback for improvement, even for those who are anti-union.
- Forms will be sent out to get feedback. It'll be a democratic process.

IX. **20 minute Idea Brainstorm Session**

- What do you want the future of the GRO to be?
- What initiatives should we work on?

Discussion

- *Gabriel*: So with respect to group funding committee, But there's 5 motivated people that, and then, if they, if they make something with the group, they they make a date with the group, then approve, presents it to them, and then, if they unanimously agree, then the group funding goes through, and if one of the person disagrees in the group. Then the group gets the chance of rebuttal in front of the entire GC. But that would mean that our GC meetings would already be cut down in time by 20 min, and these people wouldn't need to come here, and we also have things that GC members can do and feel trusted with. Another thing was at the start of the semester go to meetings, go to where first year graduate students are, and just tell them, Hey, we're here. Let's just create something that people know that the GRO is there and that we really want to know about their concerns. They can come to us.
- *Michael*: GC reps can reach out to their department people and maybe request for initial 10 mins to brief the organization during the seminars to make students aware about how we are here to do things for them.
- *Unknown*: I don't think so all departments have that weekly seminar in place. My department doesn't have anything as such.
- *Ali*: We could target Fall orientation seminars instead to do the same. We could start from there.
- *Michael*: With the group funding committee, the issues might be that the pressure falls on a smaller group and sometimes there are controversial topics like the last one which was a religious presentation. The margin of people who said yes was not very high compared to the ones who said no. Sometimes people might not contribute enough.
- *Unknown*: I think the advantage was that it was reducing the load for others.
- *Ali*: But I'd love to keep it on the table like maybe you know. See, if people would want to discuss that further on, because one thing, which is a big USP for that is that it does reduce time during GC meetings and we could focus on other agenda rather than spend an hour and a half here.
- *Caleb*: Yeah, so maybe this is just an idea of how the meeting should be structured. But when I was the Vice President Drexel, GSA. which is the equivalent of this, we would have student groups, basically within, like, there were 4 deadlines a year when they would submit funding requests rather than on a weekly basis. And I think this would free up a lot of time in these meetings, because then, you know, we'd have one big GC equivalent meeting or one big E board meeting to go through them all. Vote on, and then do that. One day that frees up a lot of this time in these meetings, for student concerns and hard discussions. Voting for 500 dollars here and there doesn't hit people.
- *Ali*: Yeah, I mean, I think one of the things which we can kind of conclude honestly is that we can figure out a more efficient way of handling these requests. One of them could be the way that we know the way that this is discussed, and the discussion forums. But I think it's it's gonna be a good idea moving ahead to figure out a solution for this, which is, you know, it takes less time for everyone who's here.
- *Heramb*: Can we ask groups to submit a video of the presentation? Then send it across GC and give them like 3 days or something, for you know, asking questions, and then to answer it. I mean, it all happens by email. It makes it slower and less interactive, I know.
- *Michael*: Mailing the GC has always been very rough so I guess it could be a good back up option. But for now, we could put it aside.

X. Open Discussion & Questions

- *Connor Sedlacek (Classics)*: *IN TEXT* I just want to suggest something that's come up in a few recent elections: I feel like the GRO could be a great first stop for international grads adjusting to life here. Giving practical advice on Visa issues, housing, etc. I'm not international but I've seen a lot of people feeling quite bewildered at first.
- *Ali*: I do agree on this being an international student myself, you know the first few months. Yeah, basically concerns about international grad students adjusting. I mean, this was something that comes, you know, came up with me when I was here, you know, 5 years ago, and every

international soon I've ever spoken to has had problems adjusting over here. Part of that is kind of resolved with, you know, things like orientation.

- *Unknown*: OIS isn't that responsive. We can work with advisors and TRU to deal with such concerns regarding housing and other problems to help with smooth transition.
- *Ali*: We can come up with a manual that acts like a GRO guide for new international students to help them settle more comfortably in this space. The advocacy chairs would help with it.
- There'll be brainstorming sessions once a month.
- WSE GC Reps send the questions you have for Dean Ed if you can't make it.

XI. Adjournment

- a. *Unknown*: Motion to adjourn the meeting
 - i. *Unknown*: Second
 - ii. Yea: 33, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
 - iii. The motion passes.
- The meeting adjourns at 7:37 pm.

XII. Voting Details

| | Update the cell colored BLUE (Voting Motion ID) to show the voting details of the motions for the specific meeting | | | | | |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Voting Motion ID | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 |
| Motion | To approve meeting minutes | To approve group funding request -Anthropology department | To approve Intercampus formal | To approve group funding request for ANSHE lecture | To approve the GSSI form | To adjourn the meeting at 7:37 pm |
| Anthropology | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Applied Mathematics & Statistics (AMS) | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| History of Art | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Biology | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Biomedical Engineering (BME) | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Biophysics | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Chemistry | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Civil Engineering | | | | | | |
| Classics | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Cognitive Science | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Computer Science | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Economics | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Electrical & Computer Engineering (ECE) | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Engineering Management | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | | Yea |
| English | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Environmental Health and Engineering (formerly DOGEE) | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| EPS (Earth and Planetary Sciences) | | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Modern Languages and Literatures (Formerly GRLL) | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| History | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| History of Science and Technology | | | | | | |
| Comp Thought and Literature | Yea | Yea | Abstain | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Information Security Inst | | | | | | |
| Materials Science & Engineering | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | |
| Mathematics | | | | | | |
| Mechanical Engineering | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Near Eastern Studies (NES) | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | |
| Philosophy | | | | | | |
| Physics and Astronomy | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Political Science | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Psychological and Brain Sciences | | | | | | |
| Sociology | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Writing Seminars | | | | | | |
| Robotics | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Co-Chair 1 | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Co-Chair 2 | | | | | | |
| Secretary | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Treasurer | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Treasurer | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Admin & Funding | | | | | | |
| Social 1 | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Social 2 | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Advocacy 1 | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Advocacy 2 | | | | | | |
| Communications | | | Yea | | | |
| Diversity | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Graduate Involvement Chair | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea | Yea |
| Intercampus Chair | Yea | Yea | | Yea | Yea | |
| E-sports coordinator | | | | | | |
| Health & Wellness | | | | | | |
| Security Concerns Chair | Yea | Yea | | Yea | Yea | |
| Yea | 36 | 37 | 35 | 37 | 36 | 33 |
| Nay | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Abstain | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | | |