



Graduate Representative Organization

GC Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: 18:00 PM ET October 2nd, 2023

Olin 305 and [Zoom](#)

I. Call to Order and Agenda Review

- The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm.

II. Quick Summary of Voting Guidelines

- Lakshmi & Gabriel: *List out voting guidelines* Voting via 2 ways for in-person and online folks. For in-person via show of hands and the vote recording form, for online via Zoom chat and the vote recording form.
- Ali: As of now, we require attendance from reps for at least 50% of the GC sessions in a semester for their department to be considered eligible for conference grants. I know this is very inconvenient so we definitely need to think of an alternative for this, reps are welcome to share their ideas.
- Michael: We'll be changing the name of the voting form to vote recording form as this form was meant to record what your vote is and to publish it publicly. It is not the main way for you to vote, that is done during the meeting itself either as a show of hands or via Zoom chat.
- Shashank: If the dept has more than 1 rep, how do we vote?
- Ali: Only one vote per department. You can discuss and send in a vote.

III. Approval of September 18th Meeting Minutes: GC Minutes 09.18.23

- Ali: I motion to approve these minutes.
- Michael seconds.
- Voting ID: 64
- Motion passes and minutes are approved.

IV. Meeting with KSAS Dean's Confirmed!

- A. October 10th (noon-1pm w/ Dean Favret)
- B. December 6th (noon-12:45pm w/ Dean Celenza + Dean Favret)
- C. February 15th (noon-1pm w/ Dean Favret)
- D. April 16th (noon-1pm w/ Dean Favret)

- Michael: It is a goal of the GRO for GC reps to meet their Deans at least twice a semester. So these are the finalized dates for reps to bring in their complaints and questions to senior admin directly. **We will be sending out a request for feedback later today so that we can collect all your questions and forward it to them in advance so that they come prepared for the meeting.**
- Alex: How do these meetings usually go? Are they productive?
- Ali: It's a mixed bag, a lot of issues are usually brought up at once and it then depends on how much we follow up with them after the meeting. For example, the security issues surrounding the Stieff Silver building were brought up on more than one occasion. It's just a mechanism to push our voices onto the Deans.
- Michael: Yes the Stieff Silver building situation didn't happen immediately but it helped them a lot to navigate that situation with constant student feedback.
- Ali: Admin isn't good at collecting feedback from students so this is a good way we do that.
- Alex: What are the issues usually brought up?
- Ali: **Previously it was safety issues in and around campus but lately it's been about department expansion and space shortage, PhD stipend increase etc.**
- Michael: We do have a master document for this, collecting all issues discussed. We can send it out.

V. GC Rep Introductions

- All reps and EB members introduce themselves.

VI. Goal Setting Discussion

Discussion master document with all responses: [☰ GRO goal setting](#)


- Gabriel raised 4 key questions and engaged the GC to come up with their own answers for them. For those online, their thoughts and answers were collected in the goal setting master document. For those in person, Lakshmi summarized points discussed within the master document.
- **Question 1: What do you associate with your role as rep in the GRO? How do you feel about it?**
 - Luke (MLL): I definitely sense some alienation despite being here. Most of us are probably feeling an obligation to be here and don't feel a deeper connection with the GRO. The main reason bringing us here is probably the rule of attendance for conference grants.
 - Mihir: I feel like my work is impactful, all I have to do is review requests and forward them to those designated but feels like my work is very important as even small errors can lead to someone not getting their money.
 - Caroline (PBS): Departments have different priorities so we could organize the agenda better to include most departments' priorities. Some prioritize the JHPD and especially some have preferences for the order of the agenda.
- **Question 2: How would the ideal GRO look like, how would the meetings look like?**
 - Satvik: Meeting structure should probably be changed. To make the sessions more engaging and also for reps to make better use of their time.
 - Radhika: Focus group meetings might be more productive instead of discussing everything in the GC, this way we can reduce meeting times.

- Alexander: If we could have more information on the agenda so that we know what to prioritize, it would be great.
- **Question 3: What are goals we can set to get closer to an ideal GRO?**
 - Lakshmi: We can potentially actively set the agenda for the next GC meeting at the end of an ongoing one.
 - Satvik: Yes, we can keep the housekeeping items for later or for the focus group meetings.
 - Alex: I think this depends on what its best positioned to accomplish. What are the core tasks for the GRO? To meet with the Deans, to distribute grants? We can prioritize after answering these questions first.
 - Gabriel: For the strengths of the GRO, we're best at social events. Which is key to the graduate student experience. What we want to do is expand beyond that and advocate for things.
- **Question 4: What are the specific things we can do to reach these goals?**
 - Ali: For the agenda to be more engaging we need to change the way it's been decided up until now. It's always been a factor of the presiding co-chairs as they frame the agenda and it's their priority of items that takes precedence.
 - Alexander: Focus groups would be better at filling in the gaps, and in collecting information very specific to an issue and discussing that in depth.
 - Michael: Adding to Ali, although we decide the agenda, we want everyone to feel empowered to add something you wish to discuss to the agenda, even the priority of listed items can be changed by anyone.
- Gabriel: Thank you for all your perspectives. We've compiled them in the master document and we'll be sending it out after this meeting.
- Michael: The way this would be utilized is in deciding focus groups for each issue put forth.

VII. Grad Groups and Points of Contact

- Michael: The GRO used to keep a list of all grad student groups existing on campus to help promote them. So if any group wanted to be registered they had to go through the GRO for that, but recently admin changed that so we don't have an updated list of all active grad student groups. **We need you to mail the GRO about all the department groups or other groups that you are aware of, with their point of contact and whether they'd like to be involved with the GRO in anything.**

VIII. OIS Issues Document:

- A.  OIS Related Issues
- Michael: We do know that OIS has been a nightmare for most international grad students, **we need your help in sending out this form to your departments to compile more complaints on OIS.** We don't mind however long this document is, we need a comprehensive list of issues to bring up.

IX. Potential Conflict of Interest Document:

- A. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C8LSwhLFhknG4cnwQ08JGVGhXiXZ53wIaEcphbJMzas/edit?usp=sharing>

- Ali: This was the result of the discussion within the EBoard post the recent GC meeting. In the spirit of transparency we discussed that we should let people know of all the groups we are currently serving on. For now, we have this document where all EB members have listed out their affiliations for transparency purposes. GC members are not mandated to do this but are definitely welcome to declare their affiliations.

X. Department Data Collection Form by Annie and Chris (Physics & Astronomy):

A. <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Rcvy1HcAfqXPZjJL6WKR01FmbKq7ILtzPi2tiSlue5w/edit>

- Gabriel: I want to share this form that our physics and astronomy reps, Annie and Chris, made and sent out to their department. This is a really cool form and we'd like them to talk about the responses they've got.
- Chris: We had sent out this short survey to gather what our students' concerns were so we raised some open ended questions in the form such as international student issues, does the GRO mean anything to you, do the students believe that the GRO is serving them well etc.
- Gabriel: Thanks Chris! What I've done is copied his form and I've shared his template with all the other reps so that you can edit it to fit your department or use it as it is and send it out. You can even make QR codes of this form to circulate it throughout your department so that people can fill it whenever.

XI. Updates from the EBoard

- Michael & Ali: So this portion of the agenda is usually part of most agendas because we previously received feedback from the GC that they have no idea what the EB is up to and there is a strong disconnect between the two. However since a lot of folks wanted to change the agenda structure this portion can also be up for discussion.
 - A. Conference and Travel Grants Update (Mihir)
 - Mihir: We're still verifying the eligibility of departments for these grants. As informed earlier, we do this by checking attendance for the previous semester. Once this is done we will be sending out the list of eligible departments and we expect the form for Fall 2023 grants to be closed at the end of the month and results to be announced a week after that. A major change in policy is that we used to fund a max amount of \$1000 per semester per group, we have changed that to \$800 per student organization per semester due to budget constraints.
 - Ali: So what these grants mean is that if any student group wishes to hold an event or anything they can reach out to the GRO for sponsorship.
 - B. Intercampus Meetings Updates (Satvik & Will)
 - Satvik: We have heard back from all other intercampus chairs. The BSPH-SA is hosting a halloween party so I'm meeting them this week to figure out how we can contribute financially to this. Right now I'm focusing on setting up seminars to see what issues students are facing across campuses with the other intercampus chairs so we should have updates for those soon.

C. JHPD Update Email & Potential Statement (Yu)

☰ September updates and useful resources related to campus security

- Yu: **So recently the JHPD draft policies have been released and we can all go through and submit feedback by Nov 20th.** There have also been two new routes-the Giant Night Ride and the Avenue Night Ride, which you can find on the Transloc app. I'll be sending a mail with all the latest campus security updates after the GC votes and approves this to be sent out to the grad student body.
- Michael: The EB has already voted to approve it so we wanted the GC to go through it and give some feedback. The document link is attached in the agenda and we can have people review this in a couple of minutes.
- Ali: **The main thing the GRO is trying to do this time is to bridge the gap and serve as a resource place, so we've been asking the Health & Wellness, Advocacy, Professional Development and Security Concerns chairs to compile resources and send updates in monthly newsletters.**
- Yu: One feedback I got previously is that one GC member booked a Night Ride that got canceled and never got reassigned after, so I encourage all GC members to bring up Transloc issues with me as I can bring it up with the Transportation Office. I will also need the date of the travel and your name and JHED to give them information to trace it.

D. Monthly Summary for September: ☰ 2023_09_Monthly_Summary (Lakshmi)

- Lakshmi: Just a quick recap as to why this practice was started late into the previous semester. This was done to keep the grad students aware of all our activities in a given month as we usually send them a lot of emails close to any event or announcement and this is an opportunity to show them all that we've done. This way we wanted to engage with the students better. The summary starts out the feedback form as it is our flagship way to collect feedback and then moves on to our 'highlights for the month'. It's only a one page document as we know students don't have the bandwidth to read too much text. We also encourage reps to modify this into any other format before sending it out. Any feedback for me on if I should change this to a different format?
- Ali: **The main point of this was to let people know what we've been doing.**
- Chris: Maybe the JHPD statement that's being drafted could include this as well?
- Lakshmi: Yes, I'll do that. Thanks!

XII. Open Discussion & Questions

- Michael: **I want to inform new reps that since the grants are opening up we'd soon have groups presenting for funds and therefore the rule is that if any group requests for more than \$200 it would be brought before the GC. We can ask them questions during their presentation to check if they're following proper guidelines. We don't have the compulsion to fund them in full either.**
- Ali: **During the last GC meeting, we voted to not send in anyone for the JHPD Hiring Police Chief Committee, so we are going to be drafting a letter regarding this vote for all grad students. We hope to get it approved after feedback from you all so that we can put it up on the website and also send it out to all grad students.**
- Michael: **Another rule is that if an EB member spends for than \$1500 for an event, it**

needs to be approved by the GC. This is basically for accountability purposes.

XIII. Adjournment

- Gabriel motions to adjourn.
- Lakshmi seconded.
- Motion ID is 65
- Motion passes and the meeting is adjourned at 7:30 pm.