

Introduction:

- The steering committee members, who have been newly elected for the year 2012-13, introduce themselves.
- Short introduction to the facilities in the library:
 - Issues are being discussed with the quality of life committee. More space-group reservation rooms are available. Quiet space for own study, consultations or office hours. These can be reserved from the main library website.
 - There are spaces in Butler that are graduate reading rooms but cannot keep the undergraduates out. One way is to use the digital humanities center. There is a catalog room in Butler, which is being replaced by seating and technology to get a digital humanities center. Larger area with maybe a separate section for the graduate students.

Annual Budget, 2012 - Karthik

- Description of the budget was given in the handout, along with the comparison with the previous year. Total expenditure is \$93,000 instead of \$83,000 from last year. Few changes are being proposed.
- 10 travel grants were awarded last year. Propose that there be 14, 7 each in fall and spring. Alumni Chair has been given a fund of \$5000. Research Conference to be proposed with a budget of \$3000 in the spring. Social events have been increased.
- Reduce the frequency of the events due to unavailability of 301 Philosophy. Amounts have been allocated from the rollover from previous years. Student Initiative Grants explained as a question to the members.
- Expenses were explained such as meetings at the Faculty House and the travel and registration of conferences such as NAGPS and Ivy summit. Fee is waived in Lerner Hall for GSAC, if space is available. Maybe forced to register and pay money for events. Percentages of people with disability and people among them who use the space are not available. Discretion of the finance committee to decide that Student Initiative Grants may not be applicable to many students.
- Last year was the first time the budget was openly available and GSAC is moving towards an open budget. The last year budget details to be available through a GSAC newsletter.
- TEASE events, interschool events, annual ski trips, except happy hours. On average, a social event is held once a month over the year. Arts and Entertainment towards cultural expansion.
- Statistics of participation across departments have been difficult. Sticker policy for GSAS events may be implemented for some events. Community Service didn't fall under the purview of any chair and so no one would like to participate.

- Organizing one event was easier than a seminar series. Workshops on teaching skills that identify the needs according to the reps and work with CCE to implement them.
- The idea behind the Research Conference was explained briefly. Hold poster session and talks to apply. GSAC may amplify the benefits by asking the Travel Grant winners to be required to present their work at the research conference.
- Rough estimate of \$3000 until a conference committee is set up to decide the details. Keynote lecture for the conference might be from the outside. Doubts were raised about the keynote and other aspects of the research conference. Motion to approve the budget delayed till the Research Conference and associated expenses are discussed later in the meeting.

GSAC update

- Chris Crew: Several issues are being discussed in the Educational Policy, which also looks into the core curriculum of the Columbia College and the Frontiers of Science. There are multiple external locations where graduate students can spend their time and conduct research and there is a need to make them more aware amongst GSAS and undergraduate students. How to change the frontiers of science program? Teaching evaluations to be discussed.
- Graduate Research Conference: Karthik explained this in reference to the budget.
 - There would be various sections including a poster and a panel session, workshops, and keynote lectures. Participation would be required of GSAC awardees.
 - There would be allied workshops for honing the presentation skills, etc.
 - The aim is to be inclusive of the student population i.e. to get active participation from the Humanities and Social Sciences. One keynote speaker may not be appropriate.
 - Question from the floor on the source of funding for the posters. Departments may provide or participants could reprocess the ones available from other conferences.
 - A small showing of people with around 14 awardees and another 14. A thematic focus may be discussed. How will it be publicized? PR and Communications chair through standard channels.
 - Peer review process and suggestions to include the ones who have already published or presented. The issue of accessibility was raised so lower quality could be allowed. Suggestions that related themes could be a used the overarching focus of the event. This could be difficult with such a diverse student body and randomly selected GSAC travel grant awardees.
 - The budget for such an event could go beyond \$3000 based on opinions from the floor.
 - Is the information on the conference requirement for the travel grants known to students? It is mentioned on the website. Also, the awardees of travel grants are chosen at random and are evenly represented.

- Tabled for this plenary, make an ad-hoc committee to further investigate the proposal. \$3000 struck from the budget and the rest is approved.
- Signup for the Presidential awards committee. The teaching awards were discussed.
- Travel Grant reminder:
 - Seven grants to be awarded each semester and the new requirement of the possible research conference. The deadline is October 5th but the deadline could be extended. Merits of the application cannot be decided by GSAC so the random selection will continue for this cycle. Responsibility of the reps. to let their department know of this opportunity.
- 301 Philosophy:
 - A number of people are affected by the closure of 301 Philosophy. Construction went on over the summer. It is technically closed for surveying at this moment. Several centers use this space so the use solely by students needs to be discussed. 301 will be freed if new space is provided or Manhattanville campus is used by other centers but this is not clear yet. There is a new Student Affairs Committee and it will be made clearer to them.
- Festifall and Arts & Entertainment update about recent events.
- The issue of the increase in stipends with the increase in rent is to be discussed. GSAS communicates the rates of stipends of PhD students to UAH and talks about guaranteeing the housing.
- The Committee Chairs introduce their respective committees and ask the reps. to specify two committees to apply to.