

Meeting Minutes

2/15/24

- Theo began the meeting at 6:33 pm.
- Announcements:
- Thank you for adjusting to food in Grad lounge
- Let's remember to speak up during the meeting so that we can hear one another
- Remember to sign in with the iPad
- Exec committee report
- Blood drive on Feb. 23 from 11am to 4pm in Library Circle. Last time was really successful, so spread the word to your departments!
- Jingle Bell Ball debrief is finished and will be presented at the next GSG meeting.
- In near future, there will be committee put together to discuss grad student health care (such as renegotiating with Aetna and/or considering other options)
- Official university policy about grad student stipend top-offs can be found in Exec committee report
- Working on getting storage for bike racks, whether covered bike racks or storage, at least on the outskirts of campus if not on campus itself.
- Parking spots at St. Liam's for grad students update: the current hurdle to get update is to get grad students past the gates. Exec committee is working on overcoming that hurdle first before getting student parking spots.
 - Montana: Katie at Hammes-Mowbray says that the idea of getting a couple spots reserved for grad students in that lot is not necessarily feasible just because it doesn't fix the problem. There is a shuttle that goes from any of the other parking lots to the center of campus, namely the Golden Dome. Or, if you need to drive in, you can ask the people at the booth for a temporary pass.
 - Theo: But not all of the gate
 - Tatiana: Could we position the shuttle to stop directly at St. Liam's? Sure!
 - Sam: But the shuttle does not run by Joyce parking.
 - Academic Affairs committee report
- Hoping to establish some form of teaching hours for grad students (to develop mentorship opportunities for students who want to teach)
- DEI committee report
- Had lots of participation since their first committee meeting. Talked about what the purpose of this committee is as well as future plans.
- Needing liaison between GSG and cultural/affinity groups, just to help with communication and awareness of on-campus events.
- trying to develop
- Supported: clinical psych diversity panel (gave \$\$ for food), BGSA events, Latinx/Native Am STEM group
- Hoping to put Black History month events as annual events for the committee.
- Upcoming events: weekend resource fair to help minority/marginalized students when applying to grad school, international student global unity showcase (see flyer on agenda for date—and go!), trying to put on collaborative women's history event

- BLM and Students for Palestine protest: DEI committee did not officially fund it, but wanted to use this as example for protest registration (e.g., register protest as an event before it happens)
- Feb 21 = next DEI committee meeting
- Apply and nominate for the grad student awards, including the Social Justice Award!
- Valloween: this weekend; register through ND Central; see Ariel for link
- Undocu-ally is new group on campus that can provide training for being an ally for undocumented students.
- Professional Development committee:
 - Organizing workshop for Feb. 16 on creating high-quality images for publication
 - Feb. 19: "Hacks of writing paper in a weekend" event
 - Contacting possible speaker for workshop in April
- Quality of Life committee:
 - Quite a bit of funds remaining for this committee
 - Since the Be Well fund ran out quickly, would it be possible to use some of the committee funds for this? It might be worthwhile considering, since there was such a great demand.
- Question about including spouses in intramurals and having more RecSports classes for grad students only.
 - Arpitha: spouse needs ID card in order to access any of the RecSports events.
 - But would that solve issues with registering for intramural sports? Probably not. That's probably a different issue that GSG is exploring.
 - Ariel: University doesn't count "spouse" status unless the couple is legally married, regardless of whether the couple is heterosexual or not.
 - There was Yoga for grad students and it was really nice - could we have it once a week instead of once every two weeks? Grad Life currently runs these things; but if we're interested in doing more of these kinds of events, then there are different committees in GSG that could also send money to this
 - Sustainability committee:
- Holler to Ben and Julie if you have any ideas for Earth Day (April 22) events
- If anyone knows anyone who works on climate change issues, point them to the Tuesday, April 16 panel that Ben is putting on! And at least attend!
- New business:
- Information meeting about applying for grants; it was at 4pm, which is a time for classes. Would it be possible to change times for more people to attend?
 - Mimi suggests that we reach out to Allan Loup and maybe hosting it at lunchtime so that more people can attend.
- International students: it's difficult to buy a car when first arriving here. Is there something to help with this?
 - Tatiana: ISA is trying to create a really large fund to help subsidize international students with initial costs when coming to USA, such as first month's rent and food and moving and carpooling. Talk to ISA more about this and if it would be possible, though it would be an ambitious undertaking and we would need a large sponsor in order to make it happen for every international student.

- Could we also reach out to Financial Aid? Maybe?
- Grad student instructors of record (not TAs, and only some departments in College of Arts & Letters?) get 5 meal plans to go into the dining hall with students. Could we get more, and could we extend this option to other non-instructors?
 - Talk to departmental DGSs if you want to see if you have this option or not.
 - Aarohi: Faculty get 50% off at the dining hall. Could grad students get similar things?
- Pranav: Has there been an update for the parking situation?
 - Ariel: Has brought up increasing costs of parking permits with grad school administration. But stipends for health care are above it in terms of priority. Exec board will let us know if they receive updates or hear of any committees being formed.
- November meeting: issue came up where stipend was increasing, but so were rent costs in South Bend. Has Exec board since received any updates?
 - University does not currently control rent prices for places like Overlook and Landings; the leasing offices control the rent and raise it in accordance with housing markets in South Bend. University is currently building new housing that they will own that they can control in terms of rent stability, timing TBD (probably after we've graduated).
 - Fischer is still owned and controlled by the University in terms of rent.
- College of Engineering announcement on **stipend top-off**: this is true of any grad school program, regardless of whether that program has announced it or not. The Grad School pays the top-off; **contact the Office of Grants and Fellowships** if you have additional questions.
- Shuttle service: is there a way to increase the number of locations and the frequency of which the shuttle runs? Theo says that GSG can take a look at it.
- Non-GSG announcement: Eclipse on April 8. Will have unlimited access because it's the sun! Just please get solar eclipse glasses—check out the library for the glasses so that your eyes don't die. (Especially since also we don't have vision covered in our health care!)
- Announcements from Mimi
- OIT has messages on Google Drive: beginning of May, anything that anyone has ever shared with you who is no longer at the University will be GONE. So make sure to save those docs somewhere.
 - If your faculty members are confused about Google Drive, point them to OIT; don't waste your time advising them, because that is not your job or your responsibility as grad students
 - Save the stuff that YOU need and let your advisors figure out the rest.
- Grad Life will be hiring an orientation chair and Grad Orientation (GO!) team members.
- GreeNDot is hosting training sessions on Tuesday and Thursday with scenarios that are tailored specifically for grad students. And there will be dinner. (You can attend other training events, too, even if they're not specifically tailored to grad students.)
- Penn Resilience Program: good for mental health, well-being, and resilience. Mimi highly recommends it.

- Succession planning!
 - Department Reps: It's not the department rep's job to get their seat filled next year...BUT if you want the good work that we do at GSG to keep going, then please keep an eye out for your successor.
 - If you're interested in being an Exec board member, talk to Ariel and Theo and Shashi
 - Exec board needs help putting an election committee (not a big time commitment).
- 3MT finals are on Feb. 28; has free food and wine and beer
- This weekend is "Junior Parent Weekend," so don't be on campus this weekend unless you have to be.
- Fischer Community Center: used to have the flags of the countries of origin of all residents hanging from the ceiling. Mimi has inherited that box. There are 64 flags in that box. So if you have ideas for how to use and/or display these flags, reach out to her.
- Ramadan begins March 10. For those of us celebrating Ramadan, blessings! Please let Grad Life know if they can do anything to make your Ramadan experience at Notre Dame better.
- Theo brought games and snacks; so please stay for a game night!
- Theo concludes meeting at 7:21pm.