

2024-2025

Graduate Student Union Executive Board

President: Nell Karpinski

Vice President: Jacquelin Zak

Vice President: Fadwa Kamari

Our Vision:

Our overall goal as a ticket is to uplift graduate student voices and reach a more diverse graduate student body. We recognize there is a gap of information that exists between the Graduate Student Government and less involved members of the graduate student body. It is our goal to overcome this disparity. We will take it upon ourselves to provide open and direct communication between all graduate students and the executive board and chairs. In addition to the action items listed below, we will also continue to advocate for an increased stipend.

Many graduate students are unaware of the resources available to them through Graduate Student Government, and we would like to overcome that communication barrier. **We will create a question/concern form for graduate students to reach out directly to the executive board, where submissions will receive a response within a week with an update on how their concerns are being addressed.** We hope to create a more streamlined and direct communication process that will allow us to more efficiently resolve current issues and become aware of any upcoming concerns and desires of the graduate student body.

We will also work to consolidate GSG event emails and to create a GSG calendar of events specifically prioritizing any events put on by graduate student organizations. We understand that graduate students do not always have the time to read through all of their emails, and it is our vision that a consolidated calendar of events will increase awareness and participation within the student body. Graduate student groups put on insightful events throughout the year, and we want to make sure that graduate students have enough notice and easy access.

In addition to this work, **we will continue to fight for increased stipends for graduate students that reflect the cost of living.** Fair compensation is crucial for quality of life and is therefore one of our main priorities. Additionally, for undergraduate students that keep their cars on campus full time, **we would like to request them to have a designated long term parking section so that the graduate students that are commuting onto campus daily can access reasonable parking arrangements.**

Another one of our goals is to make sure graduate students are well aware of their rights. **We will work towards implementing a generalized teaching assistant information session during graduate orientation where graduate students are properly trained to interact with their undergraduate students. The training will emphasize FERPA policy and Title XI training.** This will lead to a safer educational environment for graduate students, their teaching endeavors in supporting undergraduate students, and the university itself. In addition, we want to make sure that all graduate students are aware of their educational rights inside and outside of the

classroom. In this, **we hope to develop a better relationship with the Sara Bae Center for Disabilities for graduate students.**

We envision a student government that encompasses and uplifts every graduate student. Though we are all from the same department, we all work in different fields, buildings, and have different cultural backgrounds and identities. With that being said, we know that we do not encompass the full spectrum of graduate students and their needs. We envision our roles as President and Vice Presidents to listen to your needs and advocate for them. Our goal is to have committee chairs representing numerous graduate departments to bring their own unique perspectives to our attention. We also want to amplify the voices of those who are not directly involved with the graduate student government, i.e. current graduate students, spouses, and their dependents.

The action items on this list signify a starting point for what we will be addressing, but to be able to assist the needs of *every* graduate student, *we* want *your* input. If you would like to talk about potential action items you'd like to see implemented during our election campaign and throughout the year during our time serving you, please feel free to email us at:

Nell (she/her/hers) - nkarpins@nd.edu
Fadwa (she/her/hers) - fkamari@nd.edu
Jacquelin (she/her/hers) - jzak@nd.edu

Nell Karpinski Biography

Nell is a third-year computational chemistry student in the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department and is a member of the Corcelli lab. Her research involves using computer simulations to model the binding process of ligands to DNA. Throughout Nell's time at Notre Dame, she has served as Treasurer for Expanding Your Horizons (EYH), Co-president of Expanding Your Horizons, a representative for the Computational Molecular Science and Engineering Laboratory (CoMSEL) Council, and Vice President of CoMSEL Council. Throughout her time with EYH, Nell has had the privilege of overseeing fundraising efforts, including reaching out to companies and local chapters for solicitations and successfully securing financial support. Additionally, she assists in the organization and promotion of the EYH yearly conference for middle schoolers. As she serves on CoMSEL council, she helps oversee the planning of CoMSEL monthly events as well as working with a team to organize the first CoMSEL Symposium. When she is not working, she enjoys spending time with her dog outdoors, cooking, and reading.

Fadwa Kamari Biography

Fadwa is a first-year graduate student in the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department. Fadwa is in the Del Valle lab, where her research centers around finding a peptide inhibitor of protein-protein interactions implicated in neurodegenerative disease pathology. During her first year, Fadwa has become involved with the Graduate Student Government's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, which included but was not limited to, attending regular meetings and voting on budgets for the year. This has allowed her to take part in the event planning process for multiple clubs and organizations across campus. In addition, Fadwa was involved in the Notre

Dame Muslim Student Association and Student Voices for Palestine. Fadwa values creating a vibrant, friendly, and inclusive Notre Dame community where everyone can feel comfortable and confident in having their voice heard. She also values community outreach and has enjoyed participating with local nonprofits in the city of South Bend. In her free time, Fadwa enjoys exploring new places downtown and spending time with friends.

Jacquelin Zak Biography

Jacquelin is a second-year graduate student in the Helquist-Wiest Lab. Her research interests include developing predictive models for synthetic chemistry methods in hopes to expedite the drug discovery workflow. Currently, she is “group boss” where she organizes group meetings and disperses relevant content to her large interdisciplinary group. Being a part of the Helquist-Wiest group has put an emphasis on the importance of different perspectives from scientists and people to advance research from computational and experimental fields. She hopes to bring this mindset into her role as potential Co- Vice President of Graduate Student Government. In her first year, she volunteered and helped establish the diversity and inclusion committee within GSG. In her time, she advocated for more training for graduate students in their teaching assistant duties such as Title IX training. She took a break from GSG this year to focus on passing her candidacy exam, but is ready to jump back in and help advocate for students in the graduate school. When she is not on campus, she loves watching Grey's Anatomy with her dog, Elle (yes, named after Elle Woods), trying new restaurants, and cooking new recipes with friends.