of the 69th Assembly
February 12, 2020

Be it decided by the Assembly of Elected Delegates,

A Celebration of Allyship
An event to educate graduate and professional students on how to be a good ally to underrepresented groups and to welcome the Center for Sexual & Gender Diversity to the HUB
(Decided: [ Y / N / A ])

Nature of the Situation:

The goal of the Advocacy and Diversity Committee is to promote diversity, inclusion, and respect within and among the graduate and professional student body. One aspect that we have not yet tackled is how to help people become good allies to underrepresented groups. Our vision is to host an event to educate and inform the graduate and professional student population on the best ways to be a supportive ally for those who we love or care for, but whose identities and life experiences we do not fully understand.

Graduate and professional school is a stressful time for many students. Having a strong and supportive network can aid in and enhance a person’s quality of living. Pivotal to this support network is developing allyship among students. In the words of Roxane Gay, “We need people to [rise] up and take on the problems borne of oppression as their own, without remove or distance. We need people to do this even if they cannot fully understand what it’s like to be oppressed for their race or ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, class, religion, or other marker of identity. We need people to use common sense to figure out how to participate in social justice.”

1 https://www.marieclaire.com/culture/a21423/roxane-gay-philando-castile-alton-sterling/
that education and the development of a stronger community will be the first step to helping solve
the systematic challenges that many of us face.

The Celebration
We envision this event to be held off-campus in a venue that can accommodate food and drink to
provide an intimate and informal atmosphere. We aim to have a panel of 3-4 guest speakers and a
moderator. Panelists will come from various campus organizations that support diversity and
inclusion of underrepresented groups. This list of potential organizations includes but is not limited
to the following organizations:

- Gender Equity Center
- Center for Sexual & Gender Diversity (CSGD)
- Paul Robeson Cultural Center (PRCC)
- Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA)
- WINGS (a fellowship club and a mentorship program for students with disabilities and
  their student advocates)
- Penn State Sign Language Organization (SLO)

This event dovetails with the recent relocation of the Center for Sexual & Gender Diversity to the
HUB, where the center has gained visibility and is better able to serve the student population. In
addition to the vision stated above, we hope to use this event to welcome and show our support for
the center’s work.

Recommended Course of Action:

We recommend that the GPSA authorize the Advocacy and Diversity Committee to spend $1098
to host an event aimed at promoting good allyship among graduate students. This event will be
held (tentatively) on March 5, 2020 at 5-8pm at Cafe 210 West. The cost of this event includes a
venue reservation and food/non-alcoholic drinks. We will accommodate various dietary
restrictions (gluten-free, vegetarian and vegan options). We propose a 3-hour reservation. One
hour is dedicated to the panel, one hour is intended to be a happy hour after the panel, and one
additional hour for buffer/mingling. The itemized cost of the event is listed below.

Venue reservation at Café 210 West (3 hours): $300
PA System: $150
Food: $465
Subtotal: $915
Gratuity (20%): $183

Total: $1,098

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Burton
Delegate, College of Agricultural Sciences

Adilson E. González Morales
At-Large Delegate, Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications

President

Affirm  Veto

The Graduate and Professional Student Association