Graduate and Professional Student Association

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| GPSA 70th Assembly Meeting | Wednesday, February 3, 2021 | 6:00 pm | Zoom meeting |

**Actions Items:**

* Let President Alex Zhao know if there are issues you want brought before the Board of Trustees (meeting on Tuesday, February 9th) or the Grad School Deans (meeting on Tuesday, February 16th).
* The GPSA Mental Health Survey is still open if you are interested in participating: <https://forms.gle/T5mjCL4S1gxTg4Vc8>.
* Let Kade Crittenden know if you have questions about renewing spaces in the HUB-Robeson Center for the 2021-22 school year.

**Legislation Passed:**

* Ali Watts, former College of Education delegate, confirmed as a Graduate Council representative.
* John Luc Legrand confirmed as School of Law delegate.
* Bill 70-14: Virtual Pottery Painting
* Bill 70-15: Grad Cup 2021
* Bill 70-16: Virtual Coffee Hour
* Resolution 70-19: Response to Events on 1/6 at the Capitol
* Resolution 70-20: Homophobic and Racist Vandalism

**Agenda**

1. Meeting called to order at 6:03 PM
2. Roll Call – See Appendix I
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes from January 20, 2021: Approved
5. Open Student Forum
   1. **Kinga Toth:** Interested in student government (has past experience) and getting involved with it at Penn State, so wanted to check out GPSA.
6. Special Presentation: Carlos Wiley, Director, Paul Robeson Cultural Center
   1. Paul Robeson Cultural Center (PRCC) officially inaugurated in 1972, though it existed as a space for Black students between 1967 and 1972.
      1. Became an official space as a result, partially, of political upheaval and the assassinations of figures such as Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X.
   2. PRCC aims to promote diversity and inclusivity; hosts a variety of events and programs to further these goals.
   3. Funded through the Student Fee Board
   4. Less focused on programming for graduate assistants, but generally try to help all students, especially in regards to understanding social justice, race, and being productive citizens.
   5. Operates BluePrint, a one-on-one mentoring program that hosts 120 undergraduate first-year and campus transfer students.
   6. Strong social media presence: Instagram (@psuprcc), YouTube (Penn State Paul Robeson Cultural Center), Facebook (Paul Robeson Cultural Center at Penn State University), and Twitter (@PSUPRCC)
      1. YouTube channel features recorded programs and speakers
   7. Hosts a number of retreats, including a Social Justice Retreat (this year’s theme is Community and Common Purpose) at the end of February (will be held on campus as a result of travel limitations).
      1. Open to graduate and undergraduate students; have to apply to be part of the retreat, but able to take more students this year because not leaving campus.
   8. Women Empowerment Symposium
   9. Securing the Bag – first in-person event on February 16th (Freeman Auditorium at 6 PM) focused on budgeting; can receive one-on-one help from a financial advisor.
   10. **Questions and Comments**
       1. **Niladri Sekhar Mandal:** How does the certification process work? We’re trying to conceive of a mentorship program for grad students at GPSA.
          1. We are certified through College Reading and Learning Association and have to meet certain criteria.
          2. Mentors and mentees have to turn in weekly logs to ensure mentorship is happening and hour requirements are being satisfied.
       2. **Niladri Sekhar Mandal:** Have you tried something like this with graduate students?
          1. No, but could probably help with some of this and provide guidance (**Niladri** will reach out)
       3. **Diego Hernandez**: What are you doing to push the administration after the Black Caucus Zoom-bombing incident?
          1. We’re always advocating on behalf of students of color and having a meeting with Black Caucus tonight at 7 PM. Will likely have a few things to work with them on after this evening.
          2. The administration did write the letter and there are a lot of things going on with diversity right now at Penn State; need to build diversity action plans in different departments and units.
             1. Will be some time before we see systemic change rather than patchwork and reactive change.
       4. **Nico Terry:** Is there anything on the website about Paul Robeson?
          1. No, he doesn’t have a connection to Penn State, he just spoke here. We have the name because students chose that over “Harriet Tubman Cultural Center.”
             1. In the 1960s, students were studying Paul Robeson
          2. **Nico Terry:** Everyone should look up Paul Robeson, he lived an incredible life.
             1. Likely that the PRCC will have something on their website about Paul Robeson by the end of the month.
7. Executive Officer Reports
   1. President – Alex Zhao
      1. Student Fee Board Meeting
         1. Explained GPSA’s funding plans for the next few years
      2. Alumni Society Governance Committee
         1. GPSA President will be added to the rotating student government board.
      3. Senior Leadership with Student Affairs
         1. Focused on COVID-19 testing requirements and Wellness Days – not a lot of clarification on either.
         2. GPSA should set up a reporting mechanism for anonymous reporting on Wellness Days non-compliance by professors.
      4. Before next Assembly meeting, will be having meetings with the Board of Trustees and Deans of Graduate School.
         1. Let Alex know if there are issues you want brought before those individuals; meeting with the Board of Trustees next Tuesday and Grad School the following Tuesday.
      5. Need liasions for the following committees and services
         1. Student Law Services
         2. Advisory Board for Graduate Exhibition Committee
         3. Canvas Advisory Board
      6. **Questions and Comments**
         1. **Diego Hernandez:** Would it be possible, or helpful, for members of Advocacy and Diversity to sit in on your leadership meetings to help advocate for graduate assistants?
            1. **Alex Zhao:** That, unfortunately, probably wouldn’t fly with the leadership we’re meeting with, since the Board of Trustees meetings aren’t open to other members of student government and the Graduate School doesn’t even invite the GPSA Vice President. I could ask the Graduate School if Advocacy and Diversity could be present, but I’m 100% sure they’d say no.
         2. **Ali Watts:** We’re thinking of some of the recent demands and the recommendations we’re making, since there are some significant ones. Are there any mechanisms for figuring out how resolutions are progressing? Could there be more transparency outside of the biweekly updates?
            1. **Alex Zhao:** Yes, there could be additional transparency; I will say the receptiveness to a lot of these resolutions is not high because a lot of them are taking positions that are not in line with those of the university. For example, with the climate change issue recently, there was a coordinated push from all four student governments and we still received significant pushback.

We can always make advocations and recommendations, I’m not sharing updates because we’re not pushing, we’re not getting updates because the administration isn’t receptive.

* + - 1. **Ali Watts:** Are there other pathways that GPSA can utilize to make our voices heard?
      2. **Ashley Smalls:** As our president, what do you recommend we do since they’re not being receptive? There’s a tendency of something bad happening and getting some nice words from President Barron and nothing else. And, regardless of receptiveness, I’d like more updates on task forces and the like.
         1. **Alex Zhao:** I don’t have a good answer for this, but I can step up in terms of pressuring university leadership. The limitation is the bureacracy rather than a complete lack of administrative sympathy. A way to put pressure on the university might be to publicize our resolutions and stances on specific issues more. Right now they’re passed and are on our website, occasionally mentioned in the newswire, but could do more to publicize our efforts.
      3. **Diego Hernandez:** It makes sense that the university respond to coordinated efforts from the four student governments, but for the majority of us, the safety of Black students is 1000% more important than zero emissions by 2050. Maybe make it clear that graduate students are willing to advocate for certain issues, just need to let graduate students into meetings. How are we going to set an example for the next Assembly? How can we make the process better and more effectively create change because something isn’t clicking.
         1. **Alex Zhao:** I’m not sure what it’s going to take, this advocacy wouldn’t be just on behalf of GPSA.
      4. **Star Sharp:** At the end of the day, the only thing that moves a university of this size is shame and money. Something needs to be done differently because resolutions have not worked.
      5. **Katie Warczak:** Agree that things need to change, but have to keep in mind that GPSA, unfortunately, has limits as an advocating power because the administration isn’t required to listen to, respond to, or take action on our resolutions. Perhaps partnering with other organizations (GADI, Black Caucus, CGE, etc.) would be useful.
      6. **Artemio Cardenas:** Could we require the administration to have a written response to our resolutions?
         1. **Claire Kelling:** This might be a good change to make, since one is needed and we could plausibly request the administration respond to our resolutions. It might also be a good idea to have this conversation in another meeting since we’re an hour in and haven’t finished with executive reports.
         2. **Alex Zhao:** We did get a response from our COVID-19 re-opening resolution last year, but it took many months and a lot of effort on the part of GPSA and other organizations in order to get that response.
  1. Vice President – Julia Kelliher
     1. Can collect comments and complaints about non-Wellness Days compliant instructors.
     2. Looking for Climate Neutrality Taskforce member – ideally member of the GPSA climate action subcommittee.
     3. Sexual Misconduct Survey from 2018
        1. No results yet, but should be seeing the University Park results at the end of this month or the beginning of next month.
        2. Unclear whether a follow-up survey will take place.
     4. COVID-19 Dashboard now being updated three times per week
  2. Treasurer – Matt Billups
     1. For Bill 70-12, upon further research, it makes more sense to purchase $50 gift cards rather than $45 gift cards, so Exec Board will cover the additional $225.
  3. Secretary – Katie Warczak
     1. Please let me know if mispronouncing delegates’ names or if delegates enter the meeting after attendance has been taken.
     2. Committee chairs please send her attendance records after each committee meeting.
     3. Sending out newswire tomorrow, please submit any event announcements or graphics by noon.
  4. Faculty Senate – Star Sharp
     1. First meeting of the semester was last week – 6.5 hours long
     2. Budget
        1. Hershey budget has grown, but everything else has basically stayed the same.
     3. Admissions and Enrollment
        1. Drop in Fall 2020 enrollment, especially among international undergraduate students, but many had deferred admittance to Spring 2021, so Spring 2021 enrollment more or less the same as last year.
        2. Graduate students and Grad School is the only area of the university that has not shrunk; has remained steady or *grown*.
           1. Graduate School is a source of growth for Penn State.
           2. We are the most stable body on campus, we can use that to push for the changes that we want.
     4. Alternative grading system re-implemented for undergraduates in Spring 2021; graduate students can ask for alternative grades through the Graduate School.
     5. Diversity & Climate Committee – Artemio Cardenas
        1. Board of Trustees diversification effort largely dropped; created a committee, but don’t have any clear or specific plans for moving forward with the diversification of the board.
        2. Faculty and vice provost pushed for the diversification of the Board, but it seems like the Board is not going to diversify.
     6. Complaints about vaccine distribution and testing
     7. **Questions and Comments**
        1. **Diego Hernandez:** Could you also post some contact information for Faculty Senate so we can come together and work together on initiatives like the Board of Trustees diversification?
           1. **Star Sharp:** So you want to know the committees, the chairs, and members?
           2. **Diego Hernandez:** Yes, that would be great!
           3. **Star Sharp:** Also need to reach out to the Board since Faculty Senate is advisory; will put that info in Slack though.
        2. **Ali Watts:** Do we know how public the Board of Trustees discussion of diversification was?
           1. **Artemio Cardenas:** There is a *Penn State News* article on the 50% initiative we’d heard about earlier, which is surprising. Vice Provost Whitehurst not happy about it either, but has limited influence. Can contact him to ask for more information. We do have support in the Senate, but Trustees have the most power here.
           2. **Alex Zhao:** Next time we meet, the Board of Trustees will have met, so our Student Trustee will be here to answer questions about the Board as well.
           3. **Claire Kelling:** Brian will be logging on in a minute or two, but I’m not aware of Faculty Senate having power or influence in regards to the Board of Trustees.
           4. **Star Sharp:** That’s correct
        3. **Bryan Culler:** The diversity goal is the same as it was the last time I reported to GPSA – want 50% diversity by 2025.
           1. **Star Sharp:** That seems to contradict what Artemio heard at his last committee meeting.
           2. **Artemio Cardenas:** Yes, a diversity committee was to be formed, but the diversification goal seemed to have been dropped.
           3. **Bryan Culler:** Wondering if some wires got crossed, we are moving forward with an equity committee, but part of the charge is to pursue diversity goals for the Board of Trustees and the seats it has some influence over.

Not just women either, everything that falls into the “diverse” category.

I just sent a message to make certain, but I am 99% sure that the goals for the Board are the same as they have been since we announced them a few months ago

* + - 1. **Ama Agyapong:** These types of bureaucratic shindigs is why recent events seem to be disregarded; I find this really stressful and the university doesn’t appear to have a meaningful response.
      2. **Diego Hernandez:** My request for Faculty Senate information is for coalition building purposes, not to put more work on Faculty Senate.
      3. **Nico Terry:** I find this unpleasantly reminiscent of conversations we had at my undergraduate institution and some lessons could be learned; will be reaching out to Star and Artemio.
    1. **Thursday, February 4, 2021, Update on Board of Trustees Diversification Effort** 
       1. **Artemio Cardenas:**  I received confirmation from the Vice Provost of Ed Equity that the Board of Trustees is continuing their efforts on the two diversity initiatives - to create a diversity committee *and* increase the diversity of the Board - <https://news.psu.edu/story/626095/2020/07/17/administration/trustees-move-diversify-board-effort-become-more-inclusive>. This update again confirms the information provided by our student Trustee member, and clarifies what was discussed at the faculty meeting. If anyone has any questions, please let me know.
  1. Graduate Council – Claire Kelling
     1. Grad Council has not met since the last Assembly, but the Graduate School as a whole will continue its policy for alternative grades for graduate students.
        1. Can apply, but no blanket policies.

1. New Delegate Confirmation
   1. Confirmation of Ali Watts as the fifth Grad Council delegate; should she be confirmed, she will resign her College of Education delegacy.
      1. **Ali Watts:** Have been to several Grad Council meetings and have spoken with Alex Cassell, so am up to date on committee activities and Grad Council generally.
         1. Will also be continuing with Advocacy and Diversity Committee, even if confirmed.
   2. **Questions**
   3. **Discussion**
      1. **Claire Kelling:** Ali has already worked with Graduate Council and am confident she would do an excellent job and has already proven useful.
      2. **Kade Crittenden:** I second what Claire has said and I’ve worked closely with her in the College of Education as well.

**NEW DELEGATE CONFIRMED 32-0-1 (See Appendix II)**

1. New Delegate Confirmation
   1. John Luc Legrand (him/they) for School of Law delegate
      1. Undergraduate at CUNY (English major)
      2. Want to be part of GPSA because wants to advocate for students and be a voice for those who are marginalized. I’m here not to just say something, but to do something.
      3. Most recently worked in family court in New York; helping litigants with paperwork and answering questions.
      4. Also worked with and mentored LGBTQ youth and immigrants suffering from domestic violence.
   2. **Questions**
      1. **Diego Hernandez:** Could you please tell us what committee you’re interested in being part of? And could you give us specific examples of what skills you would bring to that committee?
         1. Interested in Advocacy & Diversity as well as Community Outreach; have focused on doing good work.
      2. **Nico Terry:** Do you have any specific issues you want to bring to GPSA on behalf of the School of Law?
         1. Not at the moment, but am in a groupchat with the other law students so I can see if they have any issues they want brought to the GPSA’s attention.
      3. **Star Sharp:** Want to know a little about your advocacy postion with LGBTQ youth, could you tell us more?
         1. Helped several queer youth get into college; lived in a homeless shelter for queer youth for some time. This is about helping my community.
         2. Assisted with clothing drives and the epidemics of HIV and meth addiction; had former users and HIV+ individuals come and speak to queer youth of color.
         3. Had a lot of events just to keep these youth occupied and make sure they made it through high school safely.
      4. **Claire Kelling:** What issue or issues that you’ve noticed among graduate students here at Penn State?
         1. Mental health and mental health education as well as anti-racism.
         2. A specific School of Law issue is access to food; HUB is accessible to other graduate students, but law students don’t have easy access to meals, which is something students need.
   3. **Discussion**
      1. **Nico Terry:** Was there anything that came up in the interview that didn’t come up here?
         1. **Alex Zhao:** Only two rough things – he didn’t mention his extracurricular experiences.
            1. Founding member of his undergraduate’s Black caucus group
            2. Trying to get a chapter of the National Lawyers Guild established at Penn State
            3. Very outgoing and persistent, which probably came through here.
         2. **Alex Zhao:** John Luc came recommended by Melanie Ouma

**NEW DELEGATE CONFIRMED 33-0-1 (See Appendix II)**

1. Bill 70-14: Virtual Pottery Painting
   1. Given the success of the Fall 2020 partnership with 2000 Degrees, this bill would provide funding for another three virtual paint-your-own pottery sessions (once per month) to be held from March to May 2021.
   2. Graduate assistants would sign up through a Google Form and be sent a promo code to order their pottery (first come, first serve).
   3. This bill requests $5250 to fund 210 $25 pottery-painting kit vouchers.
   4. **Questions** 
      1. **Claire Kelling:** Did you have unique students last semester?
         1. **Lan-Nhi Phung**: Yes, I went through the registration each time to make sure that new registrants were prioritized.
         2. **Claire Kelling**: So you had over 200 unique users last time?
         3. **Lan-Nhi Phung:** For the last event, we had 10-15 repeaters, but otherwise they were unique.
   5. **Discussion**

**BILL 70-14 PASSED 35-0-0 (See Appendix II)**

1. Bill 70-15: Grad Cup 2021
   1. Grad Cup will be a virtual four-week long event (tentatively scheduled for March 1 to March 29, 2021) with weekly tasks that promote graduate assistants’ self care and wellness.
   2. Anticipating 150 participants; each team can have up to five people.
   3. Top three teams will receive gift cards to be distributed through the mail.
   4. All participants will get an apparel item that will be distributed in accordance with COVID-19 safety guidelines.
   5. The bill requests $5,025 for five $50 gift cards, five $35 gift cards, five $20 gift cards, and $4,500 for Grad Cup apparel (150 items x $30 apiece).
   6. **Questions**
      1. **Diego Hernandez:** Who are we using to supply apparel?
         1. **Jocelyn Delgado:** Not sure yet, if you have suggestions, please let me know.
         2. **Diego Hernandez:** $30 seems a little steep for a t-shirt...
         3. **Jocelyn Delgado:** We decided to go with a sweatshirt this year; t-shirt cost from last year was $12 apiece.
   7. **Discussion**

**BILL 70-15 PASSES 34-0-1 (See Appendix II)**

1. Bill 70-16: Virtual Coffee Hour
   1. To foster a sense of community and allow graduate assistants to meet one another, graduate assistants can complete a Google Form and receive a $5 gift card to a local coffee shop (Rothrock Coffee, Crust & Crumb Cafe, or Cafe Lemont).
      1. Gift cards distributed on a first come, first serve basis.
      2. Graduate assistants who sign up will be invited, but not required, to attend a 45-minute virtual coffee hour on Zoom.
   2. The bill requests $500 for 100 $5 gift cards.
   3. **Questions**
   4. **Discussion**
      1. Minor grammatical changes made
      2. **Diego Hernandez:** Just wanted to say good job to Bristol for choosing local businesses and ones that fit with our inclusivity values.
      3. **Sandeep Krishnakumar:** Have a question about the Crust & Crumb Cafe – they’re not open anymore because of a COVID-19 exposure, so I wanted to ask about how that might affect the event?
         1. **Bristol Gunderson:** They’re remaining closed this week, so for now closed, but students aren’t required to pick Crust & Crumb and we don’t want to force students to buy the coffee at the same time as the coffee hour, so they can get the gift card and buy coffee a month later.
      4. **Izzy Healey:** Should include mailing costs in the budget; 11 stamps right now is $20.
         1. **Bristol Gunderson:** Not an issue because only Cafe Lemont has physical gift cards and they said they’d mail them for us.
      5. **Nico Terry:** Do we have enough shops with enough geographic diversity? And COVID-19 safety? What about Saint’s?
         1. **Bristol Gunderson:** Unfortunately, Saint’s minimum gift card amount is $10

**BILL 70-16 PASSES 35-0-0 (See Appendix II)**

1. Bill 70-17: Bangladesh Night 2021 Co-sponsorship
   1. The Bangladesh Student Association (BSA) is the Penn State organization officially representing Bangladeshi students at the university and has hosted an annual Bangladesh Night for six years.
      1. Bangladesh Night is a celebration of Bangladeshi culture through a night of music, dance, poetry, drama, and Bangladeshi food. This event will have pre-recorded and live professional artist’s performances.
   2. To attend Bangladesh Night and eat food, attendees will need to pre-register.
      1. Food will be delivered from Ghorer Khabar
   3. Grad students will be invited to volunteer to perform and/or deliver food door to door.
   4. This bill would make GPSA a co-sponsor of Bangladesh Night.
   5. This bill requests $3,000 for covering the cost of food and the artist honorarium.
   6. **Questions**
      1. **Claire Kelling:** Did we send this to the Assembly to make sure this was in alignment with our core values and by-laws?
         1. **Alex Zhao:** Request for co-sponsorship came in January, but not sure if it went to the Assembly.
      2. **Claire Kelling:** When is the event?
         1. **Farhan Sadique:** March 27th
      3. **Kade Crittenden:** Are the student volunteers also the artists who will receive money for their performances? Or is the honorarium for a different artist?
         1. **Farhan Sadique:** The volunteers are from the community and the artist is separate.
      4. **Ali Watts:** Is the caterer from Virginia?
         1. **Farhan Sadique:** Yes, I know we want to support local businesses, but there are no local businesses that offer Bangladeshi food and this was the closest.
      5. **Ali Watts:** So how does that work?
         1. **Farhan Sadique:** The restaurant delivers (cost of $200) and volunteers will distribute the food.
      6. **Ali Watts:** Are they in line with our inclusivity statements and policies?
         1. **Farhan Sadique:** Yes, they will provide diet conscious food and support our diversity initiatives.
      7. **Claire Kelling:** Did they apply for UPAC funds?
         1. **Farhan Sadique:** No, but need funds for this event to go forward and happen.
         2. **Claire Kelling:** Would recommend applying for UPAC funds soon, especially given when this event will occur.

**BILL 70-17 TABLED UNTIL NEXT ASSEMBLY (REQUEST NEEDS TO BE CIRCULATED TO THE ASSEMBLY BEFORE IT CAN BE VOTED ON)**

1. Resolution 70-19: Response to Events on 1/6 at the Capitol
   1. Given the alleged involvment of a number of Penn State-affiliated community members, students, faculty, staff, and government representatives in the Capitol insurrection (funding, participating, resisting democratic election process) a stronger response from the Pennsylvania State University is required.
   2. The resolution makes the following recommendations:
      1. We, the 70th Assembly of the Graduate and Professional Students Association, call on the University to leverage its institutional power in the fight for the preservation of our democratic institutions in the face of the following threats:
         1. Active spread of misinformation including but not limited to the safety of our electoral system.
         2. White supremacy.
         3. Fascism.
      2. Specifically, we demand an investigation is immediately opened into any Penn State faculty, staff, or students that may have participated in the insurrection on January 6th.
      3. For the safety and betterment of our students, as well as for the continued good reputation of PSU, the University must take any and all adverse action possible against proven insurrectionists in its employ, and have this information be made public to the university community.
      4. We recommend the creation of an anonymous tip line where reports of alleged participation in the insurrection on January 6th can be made.
      5. We recommend the university work with local and federal agencies to make a good faith effort in accurately and appropriately holding accountable any current student, faculty or staff who participated in the events of January 6th.
      6. We recommend that all information regarding participation of any current student, faculty or staff, in the events on January 6th, be made public to the university community.
      7. The university should immediately begin a thorough assessment of threat, risk, and safety protocols as it relates to possible attacks on behalf of white supremacy groups.
      8. We demand the university immediately terminate any and all relationships with State Senator Jake Corman, and US Representative Scott Perry, and that administrators at the highest levels make a public statement condemning their behavior and acknowledging their vicious disinformation campaigns across the commonwealth. We question the ability of these individuals to teach and evaluate all students in a fair and unbiased manner. We question the critical thinking skills and intellectual acumen of conspiracy theorists. We question the values of an institution that employs accused insurrectionists without any inquiry into the matter.
   3. **Questions**
      1. **Claire Kelling:** With the demand of terminating relationships with a state senator and U. S. Representative, could there be unforeseen or negative consequences?
         1. **Eli Fields:** Speaking for myself, don’t think we’re getting any benefit from associating with insurrectionists and racists who disregard the concerns of communities of color.
   4. **Discussion**
      1. **Diego Hernandez:** I also understand Claire’s concern, but think there’s more good than bad that can come out of cutting these ties. Jake Corman donates to Penn State, want to show that money doesn’t buy silence. This is also a resolution that I want to bring before Barron and other administrators directly.
      2. **Nico Terry:** There are a few standard responses we should expect, but presidential tenure, fiduciary, and judicial concerns are likely going to be in response. Perhaps we can head off some of these complaints?
      3. **Ali Watts:** Nico and Claire’s points are important and our more moderate recommendations have already been ignored, so we should expect to get standard responses. This resolution and the next one should be the start of our push toward what we want the academy and Penn State to be; shouldn’t plan on presenting this to the administration and moving on. How else are we using the resolution to take a stance on these issues?
      4. **Alex Zhao:** This is not my own position, but the point on Jake Corman is going to raise the most hostility because not only is he an alum who donates, he is basically in charge of the PA Republicans in the Senate, which controls the state funds that Penn State gets.
      5. **Steven Baksa:** Strongly support this resolution and represents the bare minimum of what the university should be doing and should also include Christian nationalism since Capitol insurrectionists were advocating for an all-Christian nation. And 7 out of 9 Republicans still voted to overturn the election results; Jake Corman isn’t the only problem.
      6. **Star Sharp:** Yes to everything that Steven and others said; I believe Alex is right in that this is a serious resource dependency issue. I think this is worth bringing it up though to make the university take a position on the issue and turn down the recommendation. Then there’s some leverage in pushing them on their position.
      7. **Diego Hernandez:** Should we leave the resolution as it is or rephrase it a little so that it’s “rethink the relationship”?
         1. **Alex Zhao:** If we ask the university to terminate its relationship with a leader of a party that controls $400 million in appropriations, the answer is pretty clear. It really depends on the response we want to get from the administration.
      8. **Kade Crittenden**: Capitalize the “u” in “University” (changed throughout the resolution)
      9. **Nico Terry**: I think getting as much on the record as possible would be more useful than getting a hard “no” from the administration; maybe ask for a detailing of all past relationships and a justification for all continued ones? It’s a more specific demand since we don’t actually know what “relationships” in line 30 means yet.
      10. **Steven Baksa**:When it comes to asking the university to do things, don’t want to negotiate before going to the negotiating table. Want to echo Nico’s point about the last demand.
      11. **Claire Kelling**:If it says “terminate,” we don’t get a lot of details. I also have a hard time with this because in negotiating with the state, Penn State will *have* to present to Jake Corman. Nico’s suggestion gives us detail and justification.
      12. **Bristol Gunderson**:I agree with Claire and Nico.
      13. Last recommendation changed to “We demand the University immediately provide a detailed accounting of any and all past relationships and justify any and all continued relationships with State Senator Jake Corman and US Representative Scott Perry...”
      14. **Star Sharp:** There might be something to said for putting “coalition” in there.
      15. **Diego Hernandez:** Should keep “terminate” in there because we *want* the university to do that or provide justification as to why those relationships continue.
      16. Last recommendation changed to “We demand the University immediately provide a detailed accounting of any and all past relationships, terminate all ongoing relationships, and justify any continuing relationships with State Senator Jake Corman and US Representative Scott Perry...”
      17. **Schonn Franklin:** Did Claire withdraw her motion?
          1. **Claire Kelling:** It can be disregarded at this point.

**RESOLUTION 70-19 PASSES 35-0-0 (See Appendix II)**

1. Resolution 70-20: Homophobic and Racist Vandalism
   1. Recently, homophobic and racist stickers promoting the far right, white nationalist hate group Patriot Front appeared throughout downtown State College.
   2. Although this is the first time these stickers have appeared in State College, they may be connected to the recent vandalism of a pride flage in Bellefonte.
   3. Penn State, as well as the Penn State community, has condemned this vandalism, but this is not the first time far right extremist messaging has appeared on property affiliated with the university. The typical response involves condemnation with the university simultaneously saying they cannot take action as a result of the First Amendment.
   4. In order to genuinely promote an inclusive university community and setting, the following courses of action are recommended:
      1. That university leadership issue a statement condemning the hate crimes perpetrated by the Patriot Front in early January 2021.
      2. That the university commits to ensuring that any future acts of vandalism that threaten the safety of students are dealt with swiftly, and any material associated with white supremacist and far-right groups found on university property are removed immediately.
      3. That students found to be involved in racist and homophobic acts of vandalism, such as distribution of propaganda associated with white supremacist and far-right extremist groups, have strict action taken against them following due hearings, as such acts would be in violation of the Student Code of Conduct.
      4. That the university coordinates safe-space training that provides useful skills and information for working with LGBTQ people. These trainings include discussions on definitions and language to advocate for the rights and safety of LGBTQ people and their allies more effectively. These trainings also help create a supportive community by identifying members committed to ending homophobia and transphobia.
      5. That the university partners with community organizations to offer methods of intervention against racist and homophobic acts. To combat such behavior and make the school safer, it is useful to know successful and appropriate tactics and intervention strategies. These methods will equip others with effective ways to reduce bullying and harassment.
      6. That the university hosts a diversity or multicultural-based training specifically for students. To build stronger coalitions and allies, it is important that our student body be more inclusive of other identities. These trainings give students the skills to build partnerships with other marginalized communities and help them understand the importance of our diverse and multicultural communities.
   5. **Questions**
      1. **Kade Crittenden:** I see the incident with Black Caucus is mentioned within this resolution, but there isn’t anything within the resolution specifically addressing what happened, should we remedy that?
         1. **Emory Robertson:** Advocacy & Diversity working on a separate resolution on Black Caucus, but will let Diego say more about that.
         2. **Diego Hernandez:** Didn’t want to mesh everything together, so I’ll be talking more about the resolution Advocacy & Diversity is working on in my report; that will be ready by next Assembly at the latest.
      2. **Claire Kelling:** The trainings in bullet point #4 are already offered by the university, so what’s the ask there?
         1. **Emory Robertson:** They’re not required though and there isn’t a lot of awareness, so very few people attend those trainings.
         2. **Diego Hernandez:** We really wanted the university to highlight these resources are available because not many people know they exist or take advantage of them.
   6. **Discussion**
      1. **Kade Crittenden**: Capitalize the “u” in “University” throughout the resolution (revision made).
      2. **Diego Hernandez:** Change the start of bullet point #4 to “That the University highlight and expand any and all available resources that provide useful skills and information for working with LGBTQ people”
         1. Amendment passed
      3. **Claire Kelling:** Safe space training (https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/campus-community-diversity/lgbtq-community/be-informed/faculty-staff-lgbtq-workshops) not well advertised to grad students and not sure if offered to undergraduates.
      4. **Star Sharp:** Maybe this training should become part of new student orientation.

**RESOLUTION 70-20 PASSES 34-0-0 (See Appendix II)**

1. Reports
   1. Speaker of the Assembly – Yasha Duggal
      1. Want to thank everyone for their work; know a lot of people are frustrated with the administration, but our efforts are getting noticed by the graduate population.
      2. All this work shouldn’t be on Advocacy & Diversity; all committees should make sure that they are advocating for grad students and reaching out to all graduate populations.
      3. Share events and have open dialogues with your constituents
      4. Climate Action Subcommittee
         1. Working on becoming an official committee
         2. Working on creating a GPSA climate action vision so that our events can be greener and sustainable.
   2. Advocacy and Diversity – Diego Hernandez
      1. Mental Health Survey
         1. Received about 45 different responses; going through it and selecting out larger themes.
            1. Figuring out how to deliver this information to faculty

3-4 minute video; hire a PSU grad student or undergrad to film and 1-2 “actors.”

Animated comic strip with the same information

* + - 1. Legislation responding to Black Caucus Zoom bombing
         1. Will be completed ASAP and sent to Exec Board for feedback
      2. Meets Assembly Wednesdays at 5 PM
    1. **Questions and Comments**
       1. **Claire Kelling:** Survey is still open if you’re interested in participating: <https://forms.gle/T5mjCL4S1gxTg4Vc8>.
       2. **Alex Zhao:** Can you reach out to Natalie when you’re ready to do the video and strip in case she can help you with those things?
          1. **Diego Hernandez:** Yes, will definitely be reaching out because we’re planning on a pretty aggressive social media campaign.
  1. Professional Development – Farhan Sadique
     1. Writing Boot Camp is going very well; some issues with restaurants that are closed right now, had to made some switches.
     2. Still working on LinkedIn event – anticipating a good response
     3. Will have updates on LinkedIn and mentoring programs at the next Assembly meeting.
  2. Programming - Jocelyn Delgado
     1. Nothing to report
  3. Community Outreach – Katy Gerace (Corey Hoydic)
     1. Gift cards from previous bill sent out
     2. Working on new events once weather warms up a bit.
  4. Internal Development – Steven Baksa
     1. Will be discussing a number of things
        1. Resignation process for GPSA members
        2. Strengthening the nomination process
        3. Detailing an official GPSA policy on the recording of meetings, meeting minutes, and the publicizing of GPSA General Assembly meetings.

1. Liasion Reports
   1. Kade Crittenden – HUB-Robeson Center Advisory Board
      1. If applying for student space in the HUB, the application is different this year; new application will be sent to organization Presidents.
      2. Will get space again next year; auto-renewal
      3. Let Kade know if you have questions about renewing spaces for the 2021-22 school year.
      4. **Questions and Comments**
         1. **Farhan Sadique:** How do you qualify for office space?
            1. It depends, if you had space in 2020-21, it’s more or less the same, but if you’re looking for office space, it’s unclear how you get it since we don’t yet know how many spaces will be available. Once taken spaces are renewed and empty spaces determined, will send out another application. Second application only sent out if there are available spaces.
2. Judiciary – The Honorable Schonn Franklin
   1. Nothing to report
3. Student Truestee – Bryan Culler
   1. Nothing to report
4. Advisor – Adam Christensen
   1. The work you’re doing is great and it’s often frustrating when you’re not being heard; want to encourage you all to keep advocating for things you feel are important, don’t get discouraged.
   2. Keep in mind the administration and the Board of Trustees are not monolithic, they are made up of individuals who have differing opinions, so don’t lump everyone together. There are individuals on your side even if you’re not seeing the progress you want.
5. Comments for the Good of the Order
   1. **Alex Zhao:** Bryan Culler mentioned in the chat, but the Student Trustee applications are due on February 5th (Student Trustee Search Commitee) and 19th (Student Trustee). Take advantage of this because this process occurs once every two years and is a full member of the Board of Trustees.
   2. **Nico Terry:** Take some time for self care this evening, it’s been a long meeting and a long school year. Take even 10-15 minutes, it’ll make the rest of the evening a lot better.
6. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM

**Appendix I**

U= Unexcused Absence E= Excused Absence P= Present L= Late

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Office** | **Name** | **2/3/21** |
| **Executive Board** |  |  |
| President | Alex Zhao | P |
| Vice President | Julia Kelliher | P |
| Secretary | Katie Warczak | P |
| Treasurer | Matthew Billups | P |
| Faculty Senator (Graduate School) | Artemio Cardenas | P |
| Faculty Senator (GPSA Appointed) | Star Sharp | P |
| **Judiciary** |  |  |
| Chief Justice | Schonn Franklin | P |
| Associate Justice | Emily Lesher | P |
| Associate Justice |  |  |
| **Graduate Council** |  |  |
| Graduate Council | Claire Kelling (Science) | P |
| Graduate Council | Arghajeet Saha (Ag. Sci.) | E |
| Graduate Council | Hannah Nolte (Engineering) | P |
| Graduate Council | Nathaniel Schermerhorn (Liberal Arts) | P |
| Graduate Council |  |  |
| **Assembly** |  |  |
| Agricultural Sciences | Mandy Burton | P (Proxy) |
| Agricultural Sciences | Terry Torres Cruz | P |
| Art & Architecture | Izzy Healey | P |
| Communications | Ashley Smalls | P |
| Earth and Mineral Sciences | Corey Hoydic | P |
| Earth and Mineral Sciences |  |  |
| Eberly College of Science | Lan-Nhi Phung | P |
| Eberly College of Science | Yasha Duggal | P |
| Eberly College of Science | Nico Terry | P |
| Education | Farhan Sadique | P |
| Education | Ali Watts | P |
| Education | Kade Crittenden | P |
| Engineering | Sam Altland | P |
| Engineering |  |  |
| Engineering | Will Searight | P |
| Engineering | Sandeep Krishnakumar | P |
| Engineering | Lauren Katch | P |
| Health and Human Development | Rachel Park | P |
| Health and Human Development | Brooke Mattern | P |
| Information Sciences and Technology | Matt McGee | P |
| Inter-Collegiate Degree Program | Jocelyn Delgado | P |
| Inter-Collegiate Degree Program | Katy Gerace | E |
| Liberal Arts | Lyana Sun Han Chang | P |
| Liberal Arts | Michael Duncan | P |
| Liberal Arts | Diego Hernandez | P |
| Nursing | Sanga Jung | P |
| School of International Affairs | Emefa Abena Yengbe | P |
| School of Law | Emory Robertson | P |
| School of Law |  |  |
| School of Law | Eli Fields | P |
| Smeal College of Business | Bristol Gunderson | L |
| At-Large Delegate | Steven Baksa (IGDP) | P |
| At-Large Delegate | Joseph Sengeh (IGDP) | P |
| At-Large Delegate | Ama Agyapong (IGDP) | P |
| At-Large Delegate | Maureen Kahiu (Ag Sciences) | P |
| At-Large Delegate | Niladri Sekhar Mandal | P |

**Appendix II**

U= Unexpected Absence E= Excused Absence A= Abstain Y=Yes N= No

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | New Delegate Confirmation (Grad Council) | New Delegate Confirmation (School of Law) | Bill 70-14 | Bill 70-15 | Bill 70-16 | Bill 70-17 | Resolution 70-19 | Resolution 70-20 |
| **Graduate Council** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Graduate Council | Claire Kelling (Science) | Y | Y | Y | A | Y | Tabled Until Next Assembly | Y | Y |
| Graduate Council | Arghajeet Saha (Ag. Sci.) | E | E | E | E | E |  | E | E |
| Graduate Council | Hannah Nolte (Engineering) | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Graduate Council | Nathaniel Schermerhorn (Liberal Arts) | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Graduate Council | Ali Watts |  | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| **Assembly** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Agricultural Sciences | Mandy Burton | A | A | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Agricultural Sciences | Terry Torres Cruz | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Art & Architecture | Izzy Healey | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Communications | Ashley Smalls | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Earth and Mineral Sciences | Corey Hoydic | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Earth and Mineral Sciences |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Eberly College of Science | Lan-Nhi Phung | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Eberly College of Science | Yasha Duggal | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Eberly College of Science | Nico Terry | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Education | Farhan Sadique | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Education |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education | Kade Crittenden | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Engineering | Sam Altland | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Engineering |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Engineering | Will Searight | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Engineering | Sandeep Krishnakumar | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
|  | Lauren Katch | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Health and Human Development | Rachel Park | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Health and Human Development | Brooke Mattern | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Information Sciences and Technology | Matt McGee | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Inter-Collegiate Degree Program | Jocelyn Delgado | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Inter-Collegiate Degree Program | Katy Gerace | E | E | E | E | E |  | E | E |
| Liberal Arts | Lyana Sun Han Chang | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Liberal Arts | Michael Duncan | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Liberal Arts | Diego Hernandez | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Nursing | Sanga Jung | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| School of International Affairs | Emefa Abena Yengbe | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| School of Law | Emory Robertson | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| School of Law | Eli Fields |  |  | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| School of Law | John Luc Legrand | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| Smeal College of Business | Bristol Gunderson | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | E |
| At-Large Delegate | Steven Baksa (IGDP) | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| At-Large Delegate | Joseph Sengeh (IGDP) | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| At-Large Delegate | Ama Agyapong (IGDP) | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
| At-Large Delegate | Maureen Kahiu (Ag Sciences) | U | U | U | U | U |  | U | U |
| At-Large Delegate | Niladri Sekhar Mandal | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |  | Y | Y |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Yes | 32 | 33 | 35 | 34 | 35 | 0 | 35 | 34 |
|  | No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  | Abstain | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |