GPSA 71st Assembly Meeting  Wednesday, September 15, 2021  6:00 PM  Zoom

Action Items:
- Contact Claire and Schonn if you are interested in being a Graduate Council alternate
- Reach out to Niladri if you are able to volunteer to help moderate the graduate writing bootcamp, especially the in-person session
- Help promote the graduate writing bootcamp event coming up this next week
- Once the survey about RIDEPass is finalized, spread the news so we can get a sense of how it’s utilized
- Our advisor Adam is available if you any questions about the university or policies

Business Conducted:
- Sonya Wilmoth, Director of the Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity, discussed what the CSGD does for students, mentioning especially graduate programming (coffee chats, graduate socials, showcases, and lectures and speakers) that will be upcoming
- The following graduate and professional students were confirmed to GPSA positions:
  - Kena Gomalo (Law/Higher Ed) – Associate Justice
  - Shakhzoda Tuychieva (Law) – At-Large Delegate
- Bill 71-07: Virtual Pottery Painting was passed, which authorizes the GPSA to run virtual pottery nights (with some potentially in-person depending on interest) this semester
- Bill 71-08: Virtual Coffee Hour was passed, authorizing the GPSA to hold social coffee hours on Zoom (with some potentially in-person depending on interest) this semester
- Bill 71-09: Professional Headshots was passed, authorizing the GPSA to provide professional headshots in an outdoors setting in mid-October

Agenda

I. Meeting called to order at 6 PM
II. Roll Call – See Appendix I
III. Adoption of the Agenda
   a. Claire – motion to strike Resolution 71-05 from the agenda, Sandeep seconds
      i. Travis – why is this resolution being struck? Schonn – originally a resolution voted on by the Assembly, but instead we will go with a Doodle poll where everyone who would attend in-person meeting (Assembly, Judiciary, Executive Board, etc) can vote, additionally a roll call vote would have to be recorded and could potentially out medical concerns/issues
      ii. Travis withdraws objection
IV. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes from 09/01/2021: Approved (Claire motion, Matt McGee second)
V. Open Student Forum
VI. Special Presentation: Sonya Wilmoth, Director, Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity
   a. The Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity celebrating its 50 year anniversary this year
   b. CSGD is located in the HUB – used to be in the Boucke Building but outgrew that space
      i. Offers a physical space and lounge area
      ii. Programming includes themed months celebrations (LGBTQ History Month, Trans Awareness, Pride Month), student programs, campus and community collaborations, clothing transit, Late Night in the Center (Wed 5-8PM), staff support and connection to crisis resources
      iii. Also offers scholarships and awards along with student staff positions
   c. Safer People Safer Places program – provides variety of workshops to build foundation of knowledge so that faculty, staff, and graduate students can be effective allies of the LGBTQ+ community at all campuses
   d. Months with big keynote speakers and events
      i. October – LGBTQ+ History Month
      ii. November - Transgender Awareness Month, includes Transgender Remembrance Vigil
      iii. Pride Month – celebrated in April instead of June (due to academic calendar), grown from Pride Week
   e. Out and Engaged – CSGD offers students opportunity to learn more about LGBTQ+ community through immersion experience program (history of surrounding cities through visits)
   f. Graduate Programs – money asked specifically because we were hearing that graduate/professional students had very different needs than undergraduate students
      i. Coffee chats
      ii. Graduate socials
      iii. Showcases (film festivals, etc)
      iv. Lectures and speakers
      v. 3 graduate/professional student staff members hired
   g. Clothing Transit – provides clothing for trans students
   h. Other student support programs – Peer education, Late Nights (Petition to extend CSGD hours to 24/7), mentorship, queer peers
   i. Past events – Out of the Closet (featuring the Clothing Transit), Black Queer Commemoration
   j. To reach, email lgbtq@psu.edu
   k. Questions and Comments
      i. Schonn – Thank you for the work your center has done. The GPSA has always been an advocate for making Penn State a more inclusive environment, do you have any opportunities where we can partner with you or help you in?
         1. There are always opportunities, notably the inclusion of graduate/professional students within our education programs, expanding opportunities for grad/prof students in our workshops, but also mentoring, being graduate students being involved within student government is good for undergraduates to hear as they look beyond undergrad
         2. Any support for our programs in general, once our graduate programs are up and running participation would be appreciated
      ii. Claire – Appreciative of the work you do, CSGD is one of the centers on campus that does graduate specific programming and is a model for other offices on
campus, could the section of the faculty and staff workshops be changed to include graduate students?

1. Will be done

iii. Caitlyn – Want to second what Claire has said. How can we help to spread awareness of the events and what are your primary methods of spreading awareness to graduate/professional students?

1. We have an email listhost with a weekly newsletter as well as a variety of different social media channels (Facebook/Instagram/YouTube/TikTok)

VII. Executive Board Reports

a. President – Schönn Franklin

i. Thank you to Alex and Matt to your continued support, thanks also to Paola with our communications manager with all of the flyers we have asked her to create, thanks to all committee chairs for putting on exceptional events

ii. Will be preparing for Board of Trustees meeting upcoming

iii. Had meeting with graduate and associate deans, topics discussed

1. Student Engagement Netowrk grants programming for graduate/professional students

2. Pushing for Dean to be Vice President rather than Provost for direct line to University President

iv. Transportation meeting

1. Good introduction to all the elements covered by Penn State Transportation

v. Mobile Advisory Committee meeting, adding links to vaccination and testing sites and direct Canvas links

vi. Questions and Comments

1. Ali – did you ask the Dean of the Graduate School about travel and travel to conferences?
   a. With regards to funding for travel, nothing to report now, but they are working on it and can get you a more concrete answer in writing

2. Claire – Did they say how many graduate students are on Penn State Go?
   a. Generally the app is not popular among undergrads or grads, but there has been a consistent increase

3. Keia Jones – Will parking passes at White Course apartments not be included in rent?
   a. Budget Committee of BoT will hear proposal to decouple parking pass inclusion for White Course apartments, so going forward you’d have to pay for them separately, will send you an email for public comment

   a. Alex – Only the ones run on campus (loops/links), not the community routes

vii. Sending out Doodle Poll about in-person vs virtual

1. Travis – is this big enough to accommodate us?
a. **Claire** – In normal times it was not super roomy, but if we need a bigger room the university will accommodate us

2. **Ama** - Is Doodle poll anonymous?
   a. Currently only showing vote totals, not names

3. **Virtual** – 15, In-Person – 10, No Preference – 4, meetings remain virtual
   a. **Alex** – did only GPSA members vote?
      i. **Claire** - Was an informal vote
      ii. **Sandeep** – concurring with Claire

b. **Vice President – Jalen Jeter**
   i. Will be going to my first meeting as a member of the Legal and Compliance committee

c. **Treasurer – Matt Billups**
   i. Nothing to report, just wanted committee chairs to think about our budget for the upcoming year (about $70k), want us to plan events to help our constituents as best as we can
      1. Reminding committee members to not shy away from planning safe in-person events to help build connection and camaraderie, which is important for graduate/professional students

d. **Secretary – Alex Zhao**
   i. Please let me know if mispronouncing delegates’ names or if delegates enter the meeting after attendance has been taken.
   ii. Committee chairs please send him attendance records after each committee meeting.
   iii. Sending out the newswire tomorrow, please submit any event announcements or graphics by noon.
   iv. Will be reaching out to people who asked questions in special presentation for permission to upload

e. **Faculty Senate – Ali Watts**
   i. First regular session of Faculty Senate yesterday
      1. Both President Barron and Provost Jones were present and gave presentations covering a wide range of topics, including how much money Penn State lost last year
      2. Conversation largely focused around COVID-19 restrictions because the administration has not responded yet to the vote of no confidence
   ii. President of Faculty Senate did a survey after no-confidence vote from faculty (about 1500 responses)
1. Concerns focused on health risks, especially for faculty with children
2. Concerns around course management, lack of flexibility in course delivery
3. Many of these questions are also concerns for graduate instructors as well
4. In the process of formally analyzing this data and anticipate a report in November

iii. Key Takeaways:
1. Town Hall this coming Tuesday 9/21 at 6:30PM
   a. Unclear if able to watch or attend, there will be 20 vetted faculty members that can ask President Barron questions
   b. Admin concern that Faculty Senate is not a representative body
2. COVID-19 Dashboard now includes vaccination rates
   a. 3 campuses have vaccination rate below 50%, the conversation around a great vaccination rate really is just University Park
3. Barron mentioned that there are about 500 graduate/undergraduate who are approaching their 3rd strike with regards to testing, if they reach their 3rd strike they are at risk of automatic suspension
   a. No conversation about a vaccine mandate
4. Contact Tracing: Kelly Wolgast talked about how contact tracing isn’t happening for classrooms or any other social situations
   a. 2-3 contacts per case, defined as unmasked and indoors with an individual
5. Update to teaching evaluation process – removing SRTEs and new framework for teaching evaluation was unveiled and will be implemented over the course of this academic year

iv. Questions and Comments
1. Alex – what happens to our old SRTEs?
   a. Will follow up on this
2. Sandeep – with regards to COVID-19 response: 1) there will be 20 faculty who will be at the Town Hall, who is approving those members?
   2) On vaccination rates, we have high percentages among students and staff, but among union employees this percentage is low, what’s the plan with regards to pushing vaccination among those employees?
      a. Someone in the President’s office will be doing the vetting (trying to get a diversity of opinions with regards to positions and campuses), concern that Faculty Senate only speaks for a certain demographic of faculty
      b. Encouraging emails to get vaccinated as the current plan to increase vaccination among those employees
3. Caitlyn – 1) When was the no confidence vote carried out? How much time between vote and this Faculty Senate meeting? 2) Did anything about administering the surveys about sexual and interpersonal violence come up?
   a. Special session for no confidence vote, about a month ago
   b. For the surveys, they basically said that other things (like COVID) came up, so they haven’t gotten around to it
4. **Niladri** – 1) You mentioned that 500 undergrad and grad students are nearing the 3rd strike, do you have a breakout? 2) Is the university informing advisors of students about reaching their 3rd strike?
   a. No breakout
   b. Not aware of informing advisors because of personal health records and this warning is given to you as a student

5. **Adam** – About the sexual misconduct climate survey
   a. The concerns have been heard and there is legitimate frustration over the delays
   b. A bandwidth issue, were ready to launch last semester with town hall but didn’t want it to be right at the end of the semester
   c. We definitely hear those criticism, the reports will be posted early next week at the latest and just waiting on press communications
   d. Still planning on doing a town hall, working on details
   e. Data would have been released 2 years ago but COVID-19 hit and our office had to put out surveys and reports in record time
   f. The town hall will not just discuss the data but will address what has changed in the past 3 years, and will discuss including the student voice in the next survey in Spring 2022

  f. **Graduate Council** – **Claire Kelling**
     i. Graduate Council met today
        1. **GSFI committee**
           a. finalization parental leave policy as committee (6 weeks of paid leave), this policy exists because of the GPSA’s work on it, has to be looked at college deans, will come to Graduate Council for a formal vote
           b. Ombuds program is now live, confidential resources for graduate/professional students
           c. Ombudspeople would be happy to speak to the Assembly
           d. Next up: health and wellness geared vacation policy
           e. Policies around resolutions of problems in general (GCAC 802)
           f. Graduate Student Bill of Rights brought up, positive response
           g. Official member of the Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning
           h. Fall Career days coming up

2. **Announcement** a few weeks ago that all fall exams can be remote, but there was a clarification a few days ago that unless you’ve gone through an exemption they had to be in-person
   a. The clarification was not spread around a lot, was a shock to graduate students and faculty
   b. At the very end, Dean of the Grad School (after discussion) provided a universal exception (removes the clarification), with the exception that if the student wants to be in-person then they are allowed to

   ii. Grad Council will switch to Chair Elect/Chair/Past Chair
   iii. GPSA will need some alternates for Grad Council
iv. Questions and Comments
   1. **Schonn** – Spoke with Dr. Ades about Graduate Council and students involved, she could not stop talking about how great and effective graduate students were in Graduate Council this year and last year, mentioned that most of the legislation happens because of the graduate/professional students, so thank you to our Graduate Council members

VIII. Confirmation of Presidential Appointments: Kena Gomalo (Judiciary)
   a. From Portland, attended University of Oregon for undergrad and master’s in international studies and political science
   b. Was part of student government in my previous institution as an associate justice for 1 year and then Chief Justice for 2 years, familiar with the work of judiciary
   c. Will be working to run elections, resolve any conflicts, and make sure our student government is comprehensively functioning

   d. Questions
      i. **Claire** – What’s your program here and what year?
         1. 1st year, dual program in PhD Higher Ed and JD in Law School
      ii. **Niladi** – for **Schonn**, what position is this for?
         1. Associate Justice

   e. Discussion
      i. **Schonn** – I think he’s great, his experience at his previous institution clearly qualifies him, also have examples of his writings when he was Chief Justice, think that Kena is a wonderful asset, Sam Altland has sat in our interviews and generally approves
      ii. **Claire** – probably one of the most qualified people to serve on our judiciary in my time here
      iii. **Claire** – motion to approve by roll call, seconded by **Travis**

   f. Appointment Confirmed 25-0-1, see Appendix II for details

IX. Confirmation of Presidential Appointments: Shakzoda Tuychieva (At-Large Delegate)
   a. From Uzbekistan, my interest in this position is for supporting student initiatives in different fields, especially academic achievement
   b. Delegate representative in undergrad that facilitated discussion between different universities and how to improve connections in academic fields
   c. Also worked as a representative for our student union with the aim of supporting students in any field and for many issues, including academic and professional

   d. Questions
      i. **Sandeep** – Which program are you in? Which committees are you interested in?
         1. LLM student in Penn State law
         2. Advocacy and Diversity, Community Outreach
      ii. **Sandeep** – for **Schonn**, why nominate her?
         1. Wanted to expand on what I discussed with her in interviews and emails
            a. Interested in working on wellness weeks with advocacy and diversity, looking to expand awareness of programs, voting programs
            b. Wanted to hold office hours and create events for different
communities and in general

c. Wanted to work on AD because of her previous experience, Comm Outreach to help welcome international students, was interested in being a liaison as well

e. Discussion
   i. Claire motion to confirm by roll call, Eli seconds

f. Appointment Confirmed 25-0-1, see Appendix II for details

X. Bill 71-07: Virtual Pottery Painting

a. Matt - Working in collaboration with 2000 Degrees Pottery, local pottery studio that does take-home pottery events with kits
b. Same system as last year, virtual Zoom event to get together to paint pottery, bring it into the studio, pick up completed pottery
c. One event per month, 60 kits per event
d. Beginning with virtual events and ask about holding these events in-person, if they are comfortable we will discuss holding in-person

e. Questions
   i. Claire – Is this 10% of the GPSA budget for one category of event?
      1. Multiple events within category
   ii. Schonn – The last time we did this, it was pretty well received?
      1. Yes, initially only planned for one event but because it was so popular this time we will plan for the entire semester
   iii. Travis – Could the people use these vouchers in-person?
      1. The vouchers are just promo codes, that can be used only to buy these kits, not the same as us renting the pottery studio
      2. Can use this same format for in-person (ie being on campus)
   iv. Alex – does the bill right now let you transition to in-person?
      1. Not as of right now but can make an amendment later

f. Discussion
   i. Claire – motion to add amendment providing flexibility to do in-person events if desired by participants, Matt McGee seconded
      1. Matt Billups – might need to rephrase the item breakdown to accommodate in-person events?
      2. Claire – preferable to have a per student cost, could also host it on campus instead of a studio reservation etc

   ii. Eli, seconded

g. Bill Passed 24-1-1, see Appendix II for details

XI. Bill 71-08: Virtual Coffee Hour

a. Lauren - Based off of similar events we did last semester that were really successful and gives people a chance to socialize while also enjoying coffee that we provide to them to local coffee shops, 3 different options including an option that is downtown
b. Event will be done over Zoom and people can join with different breakout rooms
c. Event will be held 4 different times over 4 months
d. Questions
   i. Claire – do these places offer gift cards?
1. We used these same coffee shops last year so yes
   ii. **Niladri** – are there other shops that provide gift cards as backups?
       1. We are offering 3 choices, did look at other places that had a higher gift card minimum
   iii. **Alex** – coffee hours are pretty easy to do in-person, have you considered doing this outdoors?
       1. We have been discussing potentially this event, or potentially another bill to have bulk coffee/larger amount of coffee
       2. Coming from the same standpoint as the pottery bill

   e. **Discussion**
      i. **Niladri** - I know we want to support local businesses, but we might want to consider keeping this bill a little more flexible just in case you decide later or need to modify the event later
         1. **Lauren** – is a little more difficult to navigate a larger number of locations for gift cards, willing to take suggestions but number needs to be manageable
      ii. **Schonn** – we should be utilizing our local businesses as much as possible, our support helps to keep these local businesses afloat
         1. **Lauren** - helping to highlight local businesses was a huge component of our GPSA events last year
      iii. **Katie** – in our bylaws, we do have guidance that every business/organization we partner with should adhere to our values of diversity and inclusion, these 3 seemed to pass muster in the spring
      iv. **Sandeep** – Just want to emphasize that often when we discuss our vendors we jump into a rabbit hole, the discussions can go on for a long time. Yes we have our own personal preferences but unless there’s a very obvious issue with regards to their ethics or logistics, we should try to avoid the rabbit hole of changing places and trust the committee heads in choosing appropriate places
      v. **Matt McGee** – motion to provide flexibility for in-person events if desired, **Hannah** second
      vi. Eli - motion to vote roll call, **Hannah** seconded

   f. **Bill Passed 26-0-1, see Appendix II for details**

   XII. **Bill 71-09: Professional Headshots**
      a. **Niladri** - planning on doing new round of professional headshots for graduate/professional students in mid-October based on weather
      b. Holding this as an outdoor event so that students who are uncomfortable with an indoors studio can get a professional headshot
      c. Working with a photographer that was recommended by the photography department that we have worked with before, will have alternate venues in case of weather
      d. **Discussion**
         i. **Niladri** - motion to amend line item for photography to $1170, **Hannah** seconded
         ii. **Eli motion**, seconded
      e. **Bill Passed 27-0-0, see Appendix II for details**

   XIII. Reports
a. Speaker of the Assembly – Sandeep Krishnakumar
   i. Not a lot to update, please fill out the Google form if you are going to be late or absent, your proxy can’t be a voting member of the GPSA Assembly
   ii. Questions and Comments
b. Advocacy and Diversity – Shah Soligné
   i. In our last meeting we are running a survey to follow up on Resolution 71-01 supporting GADI call to make sure all graduate/professional students eligible for RIDEPass, not just those further away from campus
   ii. Next meeting looking over new plans and legislation for upcoming Assembly
c. Professional Development – Niladri Sekhar Mandal
   i. Writing bootcamp signups are going out, so far 24 signups
      1. Would like to request all delegates and members forward the event to your personal channels
      2. Would also be looking for volunteers to help run this event, moderator gets free lunch
   ii. Professional Headshots event moving forward
      1. Planning for around 13-15th of October, at least 2-3 hours of photography outdoors
      2. In case weather is bad, we have backup sites
   iii. Working on a few things: collaboration with Smeal about how to transition to business careers, first of the event will be October, will be bringing up resolution
      1. Does not require funding but will authorize working with Smeal
   iv. Other workshops: LinkedIn, English proficiency center
d. Programming – Matt McGee
   i. Events upcoming, also discussion about more in-person events
   ii. Committee looking at 60-40 virtual/in-person split, but will reevaluate based on Assembly here
      1. Future legislation about fully in-person outdoor events but also (hiking, tailgate, tie-dye, pumpkin patch), also some virtual/hybrid events
      2. Tentative date of September 26th for picnic
   iii. Questions and Comments
e. Community Outreach
   i. No report
f. Internal Development – Travis Russell
   i. First ID meeting yesterday, discussed priorities for ID committee
      1. Want to outline responsibilities and processes for starting a subcommittee and how to evaluate them
   ii. Questions and Comments
      1. Schonn - wanted to clarify that this is an issue regarding our ByLaws, committee chairs do amazing work
      2. Niladri – Do we have enough delegates for another standing committee?
         a. This is part of the issue we want to discuss
XIV. Liaison Reports
a. Alex – Transportation
   i. Lots of new programs, Bike Den, bikeshare, Smart Lyft, West Deck, Bike/Mobility master plan
   ii. Transit down ~20% from 2019, still down but trending up
b. **Travis** – Borough Council  
i. Masking ordinance passed for the Borough for indoors masking, going into effect soon

XV. **Judiciary** – The Honorable **Samuel Altland**  
a. Want to congratulate Kena on appointment

XVI. **Student Trustee** – Janiyah Davis  
a. Not in attendance

XVII. **Advisor** – Adam Christensen  
a. Nothing additional to report

XVIII. Comments for the Good of the Order  
a. **Schonn** - 1) Adam has made himself very available, please ask him if you have any questions regarding makeup of university and policies 2) We’re doing a lot of great work, will be reaching out to meet people in-person so that we just don’t see each other in a screen

b. **Travis** – Is there going to be a mechanism to decide if we’ll be in-person? We’re passing legislation for in-person, in-person meetings might encourage collaboration, understand we want it to be safe, I think GPSA would benefit from collaborating in-person

c. **Schonn** – to echo Claire and Travis, having an in-person meeting is vitally important, we are the only student government that doesn’t meet in-person, will be proposing legislation if necessary about meeting in person on the 29th

XIX. Meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM

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**Appendix I**

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<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<td><strong>Executive Board</strong></td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
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**Appendix II**

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

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<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Kena Gomalo (Judiciary) Confirmation</th>
<th>Shakhzoda Tuychieva (At-Large Delegate Confirmation)</th>
<th>Bill 70-07</th>
<th>Bill 71-08</th>
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