



ARTS & SCIENCES GRADUATE COUNCIL

Meeting Agenda

April 30, 2019; 6:30 PM

301 Philosophy Hall

<https://council.gsas.columbia.edu/>

1. Sign-in & Welcome

- a. **Vote to approve March minutes**→ Approved

2. Presentation of Chinweike Okegbe Service Awards (President)

a. **Afiya Wilson: Graduate Student Affairs Officer, Academic Diversity and Inclusion**

- i. Tremendous community builder, received many commendations for the events she organizes.

b. **Barbara Rockenbach: Associate University Librarian for Research and Learning**

- i. Does much for the graduate community in the libraries, including finding spaces for graduate students.

c. **Andrew Pun: PhD Candidate in Chemistry**

- i. One of the co-founders of Initiative for Diversity in Engineering and Science (IDEaS) and helps students in department and prospective chemists in the community.

d. Faculty Mentorship Awards are handed out at graduation but winners were notified today:

- i. Amy Starecheski of Oral History Department and Meredith Gamer of Art History and Archaeology Department

3. Presentation by Kate Daloz, GSAS Writing Studio

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/graduate-life/gsas-writing-studio>

- a. In Lehman Library in SIPA building on mezzanine, opened Fall 2018
- b. Open for quiet writing time 9am-6pm every day, reserved for people in dissertation phase but expanding to accommodate prospectus writing work. After 6pm becomes an open study space to all including undergrads. Open through May, past the end of the semester.
- c. Director and staff of eight consultants. Consultants are all graduate students and currently writing dissertations, too.
- d. Can book a one on one conversation to speak with the consultants at any stage in your dissertation. Bookable meeting rooms for groups and facilitated writing groups and those are reservable until 10pm.
- e. Also have different events (sign up ahead of time)
 - i. Evening Sprints: 3 hour events every Tuesday and Thursday, Studio provides snacks
 - ii. Retreats: make commitment to write for four days, Studio gives you food - had one over Spring Break and one in January
- f. Summer
 - i. Will be open all summer and running two retreats (TBA), keep an eye out to register in advance, there is a waitlist and spots fill up quickly.

- ii. Will also have division-specific weeks (humanities, social sciences, sciences) where each division will have priority on space for two weeks
 - iii. Also a variety of workshops coming up on coming up based on student requests.
 - iv. Can help connect people who want to be part of a writing group.
 - g. Fall events TBA
- 4. **Presentation by Michael DiSarno and Genna Fleming, Columbia Alumni Association | CU There!**
 - a. [CU There](#)
 - i. Program that came from Student Senators to create engagement opportunities between students and alumni in the city but also regionally/internationally
 - ii. Should have received an email recently encouraging you to sign up for CU There, there will be four events over the summer.
 - iii. There are regional clubs in the Tri-State area and around the country and the world that you can join to find out about events there, even if you are only in area for the summer sign up!
 - iv. Growing program, keep eyes open for emails about new events
 - v. If you are interested in NYC events to get those emails you do have to sign up for the CU There program, first event beginning of June - informal networking events, during school year more targeted, during the summer more general
 - b. [Shared Interest Group Program](#)
 - c. New Alumni Committee
 - i. CAA umbrella alumni association of institution, including Teacher's College and Barnard
 - ii. [CAA Arts Access](#) is an arts and enrichment series, you can sign up through CAA website, opportunity to participate in arts-related events.
 - 1. Student discounts for a number of events, spots fill up quickly.
 - iii. Also provide online alumni community and within next couple of months will make that available for all students as well to create a profile to connect with people for mentorships, internships, potential jobs etc. Advanced search function to find the right alumni connections for you.
- 5. **Announcements (President)**
 - a. **Departmental Representatives Thank You Party — TONIGHT (see below)**
 - i. Arts & Crafts, drink tickets and food
 - b. **Thank you gifts**
 - i. Messenger Bags subtly debossed with ASGC logo
 - c. **Time to start finding new Department Representatives for 2019-20**
 - i. Please fill out this link to confirm who your 2019-2020 rep will be. Will be open throughout the summer and fall.
<https://council.gsas.columbia.edu/form/asgc-department-representatives>
- 6. **Committee updates**
 - a. **Alumni & Career Development**
 - i. **End of year alumni-student happy hour at Columbia's Startup Lab (WeWork Soho) → Moved to fall**
 - b. **Quality of Life**
 - i. **2019 Quality of Life Report Presentation ASK KATE**
 - 1. Thank you for the hard work from the Quality of Life Committee, will be on website soon and presented to Deans next Tuesday.

2. Full report 168 pages. New to this year's report is an executive summary that introduces the report.
3. Highlights from the conclusion:
 - a. Largest overall concern is funding. Significant socio-economic barriers in graduate education here. Only 26% of respondents live on Columbia stipends alone, a strong majority of respondents, both MA and PhD, work second or third jobs to supplement or have familial support. This current structure disadvantages those unable to rely on familial support. MA students in particular face economic precarity. Funding is certain to be a topic negotiated with GWC, but it is also at the heart of Quality of Life and next year's chair should be sure to keep abreast of developments in contract negotiations. Other suggestions from respondents include expanding summer teaching options and more secure funding beyond year 5.
 - b. Stronger mentorship: Responses to new Chapter Meeting Policy uneven with many respondents indicating that faculty were not aware of the policy, and that the responsibility for ensuring a meeting is held ought not fall on the graduate student.
 - c. Columbia Medical Services and Counseling and Psychological services: appointments difficult to attain and system seems geared towards undergraduates. The system needs to be adjusted to meet needs of graduate students. Respondents requested dental and vision insurance, but not that the survey concluded before new insurance policy was announced.
 - d. Columbia Housing: Many students satisfied with housing but commented on the convoluted housing policies especially regarding transfers and couples housing.
 - e. Parental Accommodations insufficient. Focus needs to be on increasing childcare subsidies and helping parents find affordable childcare.
 - f. Disability Services: discrimination an experience and a fear, general sense that ODS was more designed for needs of undergraduates and campus-wide accessibility still a serious issue.
 - g. CCE also designed more for undergraduates than graduate students.
 - h. Racism and insufficiency of current diversity and inclusion: Departments need to hire and tenure more faculty of color, in some departments more women, and to better support faculty and students of color on campus. Black, Latinx and multiracial respondents significantly more likely to feel that their Department is not committed to diversity and inclusion, compared to White and Asian or Asian-American respondents. Both these disparities and the qualitative comments reveal that respondents of different races have dramatically different experiences at Columbia, and that addressing these inequities

should be of primary concern in improving Quality of Life on campus.

- i. Identity-based violence, discrimination, and harassment on campus is a significant concern. 29% of respondents had experiences or been affected by at least one form of violence, harassment and discrimination on the basis of race, disability, sexual orientation, or gender. Over half of the participants who identified as Black/African American reported having experienced racial discrimination, and nearly half of all persons who identify as non-binary or gender nonconforming reported having experienced discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.
 - j. Only 32% of those indicating an experience of violence, discrimination, or harassment also indicating having reported that experience to Columbia, it is clear that Columbia's current mechanisms for responding to these issues are inadequate. Perception that Columbia prioritizes reputation and tenured professors over safety of its students.
 - k. ASGC can begin making improvements both by encouraging such changes within GSAS and by working to better represent the interests of underrepresented students. Some respondents suggest working with existing organizations, such as SOCA and OADI, could help ASGC begin to improve its support for underrepresented students in general, and students of color in particular.
 - l. The Quality of Life committee commits to using the insights offered by the present survey to guide their advocacy work in the coming year, and to redouble its efforts to engage the graduate student body directly, in order to better represent the needs and interests of graduate students in GSAS.
4. Question: What was non-response rate? Answer: 336 people completed survey, so about 10% of GSAS students responded.

ii. Update on [healthcare survey](#)

1. Have been circulating this survey for those who work at CUMC and want to use medical facilities, only have 24 responses so far and only have one more week to circulate before we report to the Dean. Please share with your constituents!

c. Events

i. Updates

1. Last two cultural events sold out: To Kill a Mockingbird and Sleep No More
2. Details of event tonight.

d. Finance

i. Last round of travel grants going out soon

1. Received final round and going through them, tremendous application rate, 65 applications. Good job, thank you for marketing so well to your constituents, will notify recipients soon.

e. Masters Affairs

i. CCE Update

1. Meeting earlier this morning, CCE reps will attend first Plenary Meeting next semester and train department reps on their new “What I wish I knew” program. Other things CCE would like you to know headed into summer:
 - a. Ways to access Columbia Alumni Network - LinkedIn Alumni, Columbia Career Connections, and CU There Alumni Groups
 - b. Virtual Career Services - CCE does virtual career counseling meetings, if you live far from campus.
 - c. Big Interview - Online practice internet tool called big interview is available
 - d. Interview Clothing Closet - If you don't have business attire for a meeting, you can rent clothing from the CCE Clothing Closet.
 - e. Subscription Resources Tab - VAULT (company research) and GoInGlobal (international student tools)

ii. Masters Committee/ Update on 2019-2020 planning

1. Haven't had a formal master's committee this year, but for next year that will be a formal committee and also planning more master's specific events next year.

7. External Organization Updates:

a. Health

- i. Health Committee thinking about how to incorporate grad students more, not clear yet how that will happen, but will perhaps impact Health Rep's role next year.

b. Libraries

- i. Workshop this Friday 12:30-1:30 in Butler 523 going over the revamping of library website, there will be pizza.

c. Graduate Workers of Columbia (GWC)/Union

d. Interschool Governing Board (IGB)

e. Disabilities (SSD)

- i. Will meet with the Senator because there have been a lot of communication errors.

f. ISSO

g. PhD Council

- i. Re-calibrating itself because role not clear, supposed to be covering purely academic issues for all PhD students at all schools, share similar complaints, but no authority so trying to get voting positions within GSAS executive committee and ability to submit policy proposals to prevent things like schools creating programs with only one year of funding, which is happening at Teacher's College.
- ii. Working on inter-school cross registration.
- iii. Lots of interest in IGB position

8. Senators' Updates (Andrew, Mike, Darold)

- a. Darold: Senate turns 50 in May, putting together a task force to look at next 50 years, will be canvassing students, faculty, staff, community stakeholders, look out for notifications on that.
- b. Andrew: [One Columbia: Street Fair](#)
 - i. Got \$1000 from President's office and CAA to put on an event, will happen on Friday in Manhattanville (link to email) - across the street from the Lenfest Center, 4-7pm, open to everyone even outside of Columbia.

9. New Business (Open Forum)

- a. Question: Will new summer gym membership for teachers be automatic? Answer: If you are teaching in the summer gym membership should be automatic, if it isn't contact Quality of Life.
- b. Question: Is there an update on the ISSO phone line? Answer: ISSO Rep not in attendance, will follow up.
- c. Question: Do we still have to pay for dental and vision with new healthcare plan? Is it actual insurance or a discount?
 - i. Healthcare Rep: starting next year it will be actual insurance, not a discount, but you will pay out of pocket. There is a reason for this, email [Alyssa](#) with questions.
 - ii. Follow-up: When we know full details of this change? Answer: The other big change is that it will be only one plan, for anyone on Gold plan it gets better. The details will be known closer to fall semester. You can email insurance with questions at any time. Supposed to be on website in May.

10. Committee Meetings & Adjournment (President)

11. Food and Drinks at Arts and Crafts Beer Parlor (1135 Amsterdam Ave)

ASGC plenary meetings are conducted in the style of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (10th Edition)*

Obtain the floor (the right to speak) by being the first to raise your department placard when the person speaking has finished. You must be recognized by the Chair before speaking.

- No member can speak twice to the same issue until everyone else wishing to speak has spoken to it once.
- The agenda and all committee reports are merely recommendations. When presented to the assembly and the question is stated, debate begins and changes can occur.