Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2018; 6:30 PM

ARTS & SCIENCES GRADUATE COUNCIL

Philosophy Hall 301
https://council.gsas.columbia.edu/

Upcoming Plenary Meetings:
October 16
November 13
December 11

1) **Sign-in**
2) **Presentation by CCE (Alumni & Career Development Chair)**
   a) Kelly Ahn, Associate Dean, presented services and programs available to all graduate students. The CCE doesn't only do resume and CV review, and it is better to see them throughout your time at Columbia and not only the end of your program. CCE is here for the full career journey of graduate students and offers many resources.
      i) Highlighted a new resource, Professional Development toolkit for Master's and Doctoral Students, available from the Student Guide on the GSAS homepage (gsas.columbia.edu).
      ii) Also highlighted ImaginePhD, a free resource developed by the Graduate Career Consortium that has tools to explore careers outside academic jobs and can help students create a timeline for academic and career development.
      iii) CCE also offers phone and virtual career counseling sessions.
      iv) CCE is working with ASGC to host 3MT for the first time at Columbia. All GSAS PhDs should apply for the competition to talk about their research in a concise, simple and meaningful way for a panel of judges.
      v) A Graduate Student Leader panel is scheduled for October 19th at 2pm
3) **Introductions (President)**
   a) **What is ASGC? Who are the executive committee? How does ASGC operate?**
      i) Reviewed last year's process to transfer from GSAC to ASGC, highlighting the goal for ASGC to focus on GSAS-specific issues and better serve the Master's community.
      ii) Introduction of Executive Committee Members
         (1) President: Sarah Arkebauer (formerly VP of Finance)
         (2) Vice-President: Andrew Hsu (continuing in role)
         (3) Communications Chair: Zoë Dostal
         (4) Finance Chair: Mike Ford

(5) Alumni/Career Chair: Debbie Sokolowski
(6) Events Co-Chair: Milica Ilicic
(7) Quality of Life Chaire: Kate McIntyre
(8) Media Chair: Rogério Shieh Barbosa
(9) Three positions vacant (Events Co-Chair, Community Chair, Master's Affairs Chair)
iii) Overview of ASGC's operations, including monthly Plenary Meetings where Department Representatives vote on issues and hear reports from external representatives, and the Executive Committee meets with Dean Alonso monthly to communicate GSAS issues.

b) **What is the role of the department representatives? (Communications Chair)**
  i) Reviewed duties of Department Representatives, available on the website at https://council.gsas.columbia.edu/content/department-representatives

c) **External Presentation Ideas (Vice President)**
  i) Called for advice and opinions on which external representatives the plenary body would like to hear from over the coming year. There were no suggestions, but Department Representatives were invited to e-mail the Vice President with ideas.

4) **Student Group Approval (Vice President)**

a) **Columbia Statistics Club** → Approved
  i) Presentation: The club representatives explained that the club was previously recognized by GSAC and was re-applying for recognition by ASGC. They represent students who know and want to know more about statistics and share knowledge. The club consists of mostly MA students and focuses on events to help students successfully transfer from school into the industry. They host study groups and training sessions, mock-interview sessions, and DataFest.
  ii) Questions for club representatives:
    (1) Q: How can students get involved in the club? A: There is a sign-up page on the website, http://blogs.cuit.columbia.edu/statisticsclub/about/. The link will also be shared in the next ASGC newsletter.
    (2) Q: Are there any efforts to engage undergraduate students or the larger community? A: The club mostly focuses on graduate students and so far has not had significant participation from undergraduates, but all are welcome to join the events. The club does not offer tutoring.
    (3) Q: Do any other companies help host the DataFest events: A: The American Statistical Association helps in the spring, but the fall event is only supported by Columbia. The judges for the fall event are a mix of people in the industry and professors on campus.
  iii) Student group deliberations are off the record, but a relevant question arose:
    (1) Q: What is the significance of recognizing a student group? A: (Andrew and Sarah) A student recognized group gets to be an official "Columbia group" which includes the right to use Columbia's name, domain, and the opportunity to apply for funding from ASGC, Columbia, and make room reservations.
  iv) Vote: Approved, no opposition, no abstentions

b) **Students of Color Association (SoCA)** → Approved

      i)   Presentation: SoCA is not currently recognized by ASGC because of concern at the end of last year that it represented too many non-GSAS students. However, that issue was resolved and the SoCA constitution and by-laws make it clear that they only represent GSAS students, although anyone may subscribe to their mailing list. However, this resolution did not happen in time to be approved at the end of spring 2018. The organization is dedicated to fostering community and advocating for students of color in the arts and sciences. For example, SoCA hosts happy hours, professional development events and collaborates with departments like CCE for events like 3MT. It is the only organization at Columbia dedicated to representing students of color in GSAS and as such are the visible leaders and primary contact on campus for students of color needing support.

      ii)   There were no questions for the SocA representatives.

      iii) Student group deliberations are off the record.

      iv) Vote: Approved, no opposition, no abstentions

5) **Announcement (President)**

   a) **ASGC Goals for 2018-2019**

      i)   **Improve graduate student representation (PhDs & Mas)**

         (1) Dept. Reps asked to email Exec. Com. with any suggestions

      ii)   **Expand assistance to students through events and funding opportunities**

         (1) A full slate of events will be on the website soon and ASGC is looking to improve travel grant situations to better suit conference schedules.

      iii) **Enhance PhD collaborations through the PhD Council**

         (1) The PhD Council is a secondary body where members of ASGC Exec. Com. can meet with leaders from all the other schools to facilitate communication.

      iv) **Enhance collaborations through the Interschool Governing Board and the Columbia Graduate Council**

6) **Open Officer Positions**

   a) **Events Co-Chair**

      i)   Announcement from Mila that this position had been filled in the spring but is now open because the person had to step away. The position would preferably be filled by an MA student and Mila called for self-nominations or nominations of others.

      ii)   Q: A Dept. Rep. asked about the time commitments and duties involved in the position. A: Mila listed the process of organizing social events including contacting locations, arranging tickets, and attending the events to help with issues.

      iii) Two students nominated themselves, Brandon Graser (MA Biotechnology) and Shenghui Liu (MA Statistics). The nominees gave brief statements about their qualifications.

      iv) Department Representatives posed questions to nominees.

      v)   Nominees left the room for closed deliberations.

         (1) During deliberations, a Dept. Rep. motioned for a vote to postpone elections to October when the Master's Affairs Chair would also be decided. Motion passed. (19 Yes, 7 Opposed, 5 Abstain).

      vi) The open positions and call for nominations would be posted in newsletter and on website.

7) Committee updates
  a) Alumni & Career Development
  i) 3MT event, looking for ideas about alumni networking events and freshmen development events. Debbie asked for Dept. Reps to sign up for her committee if they wanted to work on these types of events.
  b) Budget & Finance
  i) Updated budget – pushed to October meeting
  ii) New model for travel grant applications (see Appendix 1) → Approved
     (1) Mike proposed a new model for travel grants that better suits the model of conference acceptance dates, rather than when the conference occurs. There will be four annual due dates, rather than two.
     (2) Applicants must have an accepted paper and provide proof of acceptance
     (3) The breakdown of the budget percentages (see Appendix 1) will adapt with the flow of applications, it is not rigid.
     (4) Questions from Plenary Body:
        (a) Q: Can you clarify how the new timeline would work? A: (Mike) For example, if a student was accepted in October for a conference that occurs in May, the student would apply for the November deadline.
        (b) Q: Can an extension be granted if the student was accepted to the conference but is waiting for department approval? A: (Sarah): In the past, if you got a GSAC award but you didn't get approval from your department so you didn't attend the conference, you would tell us and return the money so that you could be eligible for a grant in the future. We will follow the same guidelines this time. (Mike) Be up front in your application if this is the situation, and you will receive the funds pending proof of approval from your department.
        (c) Q: Are the percentages set or amenable? A: (Mike) They are flexible depending on the flux of applications, it will adjust for this year and then continue to adjust for future years. The percentages are an estimation but they will be made public to help applicants plan when it's best to apply.
     (5) Vote: Passed with one abstention.
  c) Quality of Life
  i) Explanation of Quality of Life Committee: mostly creating the spring QoL survey. Looking in particular for Dept. Reps who know survey design and data analysis, but in general QoL hears complaints from constituents and the Chair brings them up with Dean Alonso.
  ii) Chapter meetings rule update
     (1) ASGC Exec. Com. met with GSAS Deans on 9/11/2018. The chapter meetings rule introduced at the end of spring 2018 was not intended to mandate one chapter to be submitted every semester and is not meant to force a shorter time to completion. It was designed to address faculty accountability, and a policy will be sent from GSAS to the student body and faculty with more details. Essentially, advisors will have to fill out a basic form stating that students are making adequate progress. This is meant to empower students to get feedback from

committee members. Once these policies are implemented, ASGC Exec. Com. would like to hear how the new system is working.

(2) Question: When does this policy apply to the student? A: When doctoral students enter the dissertation phase, after the proposal is officially approved by GSAS.

iii) **Parental leave policy**

(1) ASGC Exec. Com. has received specific complaints about policy that they will be following up on and if you have issues please get in touch with Kate. More information is required before productively engaging with GSAS on any issues.

(2) Question: Are TA's at Barnard included? A: (Kate) Yes, if the TA position is funded through Columbia, no if it is funded by Barnard.

(3) Question: What progress has been made on retirement plans? A: (Kate) None, what do you want to see? Response: 403b options, for example, there isn't even an option to contribute without matching funds. Conclusion: Kate will follow up with this issue.

(4) Question: What is ASGC doing about the ethernet issues in residences? There are a number of students who still don't have ethernet and are paying for it out of pocket, even though Columbia committed to providing ethernet free of cost. A: (Sarah) Exec. Com. will address this issue at the October meeting with Dean Alonso.

(5) Reminder from Mila that when dept. reps write summaries of meeting to constituents they should tell them that they can always reach out directly to ASGC board with any issues, questions or complaints.

d) **Community Events**
   i) A survey will come out in the newsletter next week, so please respond.
   ii) Looking for passionate, vocal, social volunteers for the committee.

e) **Social Events**
   i) For the committee, looking for volunteers to organize MA-led events in museums and other New York spaces that CU students have free access to, which would fulfill the volunteer requirement.
   ii) Apologized that Sleep No More sold out within two minutes, but there are many more events coming up this semester including Broadway, opera, philharmonic, BAM and La Mama Theater. There *may* also be another round of Sleep No More tickets, to be confirmed.
   iii) Request for feedback about what constituencies are missing or ideas for new events
   iv) Question: If I wanted to organize an event to get a couple of departments together, could ASGC support that? A: (Mila) Yes, it sounds like a mini-mixer. Please talk to me after the meeting.

8) **External Representatives Nominations (President)**
   a) Dept. Reps can either be on a committee or be an External Representative. The following positions were filled:
      i) **Health (Morningside only):** Alyssa Manz
      ii) **Libraries:** Alex Cuadrado and Rahim Hashim
      iii) **Graduate Workers of Columbia (GWC)/Union:** Amelia Spooner

iv) IGB (x3): Darold Cuba (2 spaces vacant)
   v) Disabilities: Claudia Kelley
   vi) ISSO: Rebecca McGilveray
9) **Senator's Updates (Andrew, Mike, Sally)**
   a) Introduction to your Senators
      i) Sally not present. (Social Sciences)
      ii) Andrew: Sciences Senator, on Budget Review Committee, IT Committee and Student Affairs Committee
      iii) Mike: Humanities Senator, on University Rules Committee, Senate Structure and Operations Committee, Honoraries and Prizes Committee and Student Affairs Committee. There may be a reshuffle to combine the social sciences and humanities positions for 2020.
      iv) The senate should be contacted about any issues that exceed the purview of GSAS, such as Morningside Heights facilities and printing quotas.
10) **Motion to approve minutes from April 2018** → Approved (no opposition, no abstentions)
11) **New Business (Open Forum)**
   a) Question: Can ASGC Exec. Com. clarify the rules of representation for MA students and clarify what the consequences are if MA students are not represented, especially regarding smaller departments? Motion to add language to constitution or by-laws. A: (Zoë) We will work on developing a clearer policy and language, but all departments will remain in good standing this year as long as MA students are made aware of opportunity and the situation is clearly communicated to Exec. Com. Larger MA programs must have a representative, but there can be some flexibility for smaller programs.
   b) Announcement from Darold Cuba, an Oral History MA student, that he is the first Wikimedian in Residence at Columbia and he would like all departments at Columbia to be aware of opportunities with Wikipedia such as Edit-a-thons. Will follow up in newsletter.
12) **Committee sign-ups & Adjournment (President)**
   a) The next meeting will be October 16, 2018 at 6:30pm in 301 Philosophy Hall.

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.

Appendix 1: Proposed travel grant model

Whereas the application cycle for the grants used to be based on conference dates, the new model uses the date of when the acceptance letter has been received.
        - This ensures that every applicant has indeed been accepted
        - It also brings the application deadline closer to the conference

Application cycle	Application deadline	Acceptance letter received	Percentage of TG budget
Summer	September 21	May 1 - September 21	20%
Fall	November 21	September 14 - November 21	30%
Winter	January 25	November 14 - January 25	30%
Spring	April 26	January 18 - April 26	20%

The weighting per cycle is based on previous years' data on conference dates and an assumption that acceptance letters are sent ~ 8 weeks before. This is up for plenary discussion.

 The weighting will have to be updated as more data become available over the years.