

## ASGC Plenary Meeting Agenda

November 17, 2020, 6:30 PM

[Zoom Link](#) | password: ASGC2020 | <https://council.gsas.columbia.edu/>



## ARTS & SCIENCES GRADUATE COUNCIL

1. Welcome (President)
  - a. Welcome to any new department reps joining us for the first time!
  - b. Upcoming ASGC Plenary Meetings (always on a Tuesday, 6:30 pm): December 15
2. Guests
  - a. David Austell (Director, ISSO) and Samantha Lu (Associate Director of International Students at ISSO)
    - i. The time of Covid 19 has been difficult especially for international students, both those abroad and those here at Columbia currently.
    - ii. ISSO is currently thinking of ways to continue to aid international students
    - iii. International student population has gone down 17% this year due to Covid 19
      1. Very saddening, but ISSO is committed to raising these numbers back up next year
      2. There are still 16,000+ current students and alumni to serve
    - iv. ISSO is still adjusting to working remotely and providing advisement online
      1. This online advisement will continue through spring 2021
    - v. New upgrades!
      1. One goal since March was to have better email communication; they are switching to a new University supported system this week. We, as students, shouldn't technically see anything different. Their email address will be staying the same. Additional links will be provided to international students to get to the ISSO website and to enhance the website more generally
      2. Another goal since March was for ISSO to roll out a self service form in an appointment system. This should be out sometime in December (but after Thanksgiving at the earliest) to aid students in scheduling phone and Zoom meetings. This should be able to replace the in-person walk in services. The link to their calendar will also be on their website.
    - vi. ISSO is also working to add 3 additional advisors to the ISSO staff. They will be there for students to share their concerns and to increase communication.
    - vii. Please dialogue with ISSO if you have any questions or concerns
    - viii. Questions and Answers
      1. General Guidance for deadline for arrival into the U.S. (CPT OR OPT)
        - a. The Dept. of Homeland Security has not yet given any guideline for the spring semester. If we do not receive updated guidelines, we will follow the fall semester guidelines. The fall guidelines were For students that are arriving for the first time in spring 2021 may be under different guidelines.



[Budget](#). Tea also shared the status of our Travel Grants & Student Initiative Grants. Some applications have been received. She will update us on winners during the next plenary meeting.

- d. Quality of Life
    - i. Nothing to report
  - e. Arden Lee (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair: [ga2448@columbia.edu](mailto:ga2448@columbia.edu)) gave an update on our Diversity Initiative Grants. Please apply: [Diversity Initiative Grant](#). There are no deadlines on applications. There has been one application so far; however, it is being held up because it is for an honorarium. The grant should be awarded soon. The executive board will be checking with GSAS administration to see if honorariums will be allowed to be funded. Additionally, Arden spoke about the Internal Bias reporting procedure. She will be speaking to them during a meeting very soon. The bias reporting is for more minor incidences. Arden also spoke to department representatives about the Columbia University Libraries and their harmful language in their catalog records. The Library is drafting up a statement regarding this language. If you are interested in reading the statement in its entirety, please email Arden: [ga2448@columbia.edu](mailto:ga2448@columbia.edu). Arden also touched briefly on Disability services and housing. Please do reach out to Arden to share your experiences regarding this subject if you are willing to disclose any challenges you have faced with this topic. The ASGC is also more than happy to advocate on your behalf anonymously. The level of detail in your story when we advocate for you is completely up to you.
  - f. Events
    - i. Nothing to report
  - g. Masters Affairs
    - i. Nothing to report
5. External Representatives Updates (VP, External Affairs):
- a. Health
    - i. Bhargav ([asgc.vpexternalaffairs@columbia.edu](mailto:asgc.vpexternalaffairs@columbia.edu)): Graduate students have access to voluntary testing no more than once per week. There is still also randomized testing taking place. Please be sure to participate in the randomized testing if you are chosen for it. There are separate testing facilities for asymptomatic (rapid access testing) and symptomatic testing. In addition, be sure to get your Flu vaccine by October 30th (it is passed that initial deadline now) or prior to returning to campus. Please do this ASAP and upload the required documentation to your patient portal if you get the shot off campus.
  - b. Libraries
    - i. Nothing more to report
  - c. ISSO
    - i. Chuyu ([ct2823@columbia.edu](mailto:ct2823@columbia.edu)) spoke about the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) rule. One question that was discussed was where all of these regulations go after February. There are some remaining worries about what

the state will be after Biden takes office. Bhargav can connect Chuyu with IGPS or Ivy+ to discuss this issue and these worries further.

- d. Graduate Workers of Columbia (GWC)/Union
    - i. Amelia ([ajs2144@columbia.edu](mailto:ajs2144@columbia.edu)) let us know that Columbia has said that they are willing to consider health care articles in their contracts. The Union probably won't get the 100 plan back, but there are some additional sessions coming up: <https://columbiagradsunion.org/bargaining-sessions-rsvp/>. Please come if you are a unit member, even if you can't participate. They may be potentially willing to concede more, so representation is very important. Feel free to email the Bargaining Committee directly at: [gwc.bargaining@gmail.com](mailto:gwc.bargaining@gmail.com). Healthcare will be discussed this Friday, November 20 at 10 AM.
  - e. IGB
    - i. Nothing to Report
6. Senators' Updates
- a. Climate School Advocacy was discussed both by Roger Creel ([rcc2167@columbia.edu](mailto:rcc2167@columbia.edu)) and Mike Ford (Humanities Senator: ([mlf2191@columbia.edu](mailto:mlf2191@columbia.edu))). The school has been announced for more than six months. Alex has made some tentative steps toward having student involvement, but it may not be enough. Students need to present a unified message about what we want. The Climate school doesn't know what it is yet. Roger will send out a brief poll for all constituents that want a voice: <https://forms.gle/YJUhh49LMYzvov28>. Please share this with your departments as it will help to consolidate a unified vision. The poll and subsequent information will also be shared in the weekly ASGC newsletters. In addition, there have been five roundtables organized by the school over the next few months. They hope to have this poll filled out within the next week. Mike is also sending out an interest form to various student bodies and student groups to participate in the roundtables. There will be a central place for all of these students to meet. Check your email within the next week for this form. It should be out by this coming Thursday. Topics will include Climate education, Social justice/DEI, etc.
  - b. Friday's Senate Plenary Event
  - c. Mike Ford ([mlf2191@columbia.edu](mailto:mlf2191@columbia.edu)) – Subcommittee on anti-racist education
    - i. Resolution to form a unit under the provost officer continuing graduate education and career development. There will be a push for programming both for current students and prospective grad students who are from underrepresented groups. The resolution will be voted on this Friday. This office will work closely with GSAS diversity office to ensure that everything is closely aligned. Mike also serves on the subcommittee for anti racist education. All are invited to contact Mike with any resources that your departments are approaching and implementing anti-racisr education. This will be (as of now) an idea forming meeting.
  - d. Weitao Zhu ([weitao.zhu@columbia.edu](mailto:weitao.zhu@columbia.edu)) – Subcommittee on virtual education
    - i. Please contact her if you have any questions or solutions regarding this.
7. New Business (Open Forum)
- a. Graduate Outing Club

- i. The executive board received a request for support for the formation of this club. IGB is the place for him to go to get this club off of the ground. Let us know if you are interested in this club and Alex will put you in touch with this student.

## 8. Adjournment (President)

**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.