Dates of Upcoming ASGC Plenary Meetings (third Tuesday of each month, 6:30 pm):
November 16, December 21, January 18

1. Welcome (President)
2. Guests
   a. Leilani Reynolds, Nathalie Neptune, and Rachael Lubetkin (Columbia Residential)
3. Committee Presentations
   a. Quality of Life Committee
   b. Events Committee
   c. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
   d. Finance Committee
   e. Master’s Affairs Committee
4. Sign-in Instructions (Communications)
5. Updates
   a. President
      i. Master’s Affairs Chair vote at the end of meeting
   b. VP, Administration
      i. Student Group Change of Group Leadership Form
      ii. Awaiting annual report from a student group --- GRO Biotech
   c. VP, External Affairs
      i. Senate Elections
      ii. Ivy+ Summit
      iii. NAGPS
   d. Finance
      i. Travel Grants
      ii. Student Initiative Grants
   e. Quality of Life
      i. Position on the Board is currently open (through appointment)
         1. If you are interested in learning more about it, please email Ashley at
            asgc.president@columbia.edu
   f. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
      i. Statement on Injustice: Vote
ii. Diversity Initiative Grants

6. External Representative Updates (VP, External Affairs):
   a. Health
   b. Libraries
   c. ISSO
      i. One representative needed
   d. Student Workers of Columbia (UAW)/Union
      i. One representative needed
   e. IGB
      i. One representative needed
   f. PhDC
      i. Two more representatives still needed

7. Senators’ Updates

8. Master’s Affairs Chair Elections
   a. Procedures

9. New Business (Open Forum)

10. 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.

ASGC DEI Proposed Statement

Dear GSAS Students,

ASGC, as an organization and representational body, is committed to a mission of active anti-racism and of diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels of our Columbia community. We firmly condemn the injustices and individual acts of violence which have arisen, and continue to arise, out of our country’s and university’s history of systemic racism, and we support the work of those in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences community who are dedicated to advocacy and the enactment of policies to overturn discrimination.

ASGC recognizes and reaffirms that a commitment to anti-racism is a continual process, one that does not merely end with a statement. We acknowledge that systematic changes are required to address the fundamental problems of racism and discrimination on campus. A notable example of our commitment was the decision to create a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) chair position, based on the Quality of Life 2019 report responses, discussions with our Ivy+ peers, a meeting with our fellow campus leaders in early Spring 2020, and the insistence that diversity, equity, and inclusion be brought up in every meeting with administrators. This position also comes along with allocating ASGC resources and advocacy specifically earmarked for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. ASGC is committing to disbursing Diversity Initiative Grants, allotting time in meetings (among ourselves, with administrators, other student
groups, etc.) to speak about diversity, equity, and inclusion and not have it as an afterthought, and insisting that the executive board and GSAS Deans read the comments and data in the Diversity and Inclusion section of the Quality of Life report in its entirety. Through ASGC’s committee membership and meetings with leadership, we will continue to encourage the administration to pursue anti-racist policy initiatives.

While this is not a comprehensive list, some future plans of action include creating a centralized website that encapsulates all available outreach opportunities, working with CTL (Center for Teaching and Learning) to create more inclusive teaching workshop and anti-bias training sessions, and committing to hosting and supporting events whose coordinators share ASGC’s fundamental values and commitment to anti-racism. We encourage current student groups to continually reevaluate their existing programming and how they can further contribute to anti-racism initiatives.

Columbia University is a highly decentralized institution, and it is difficult for students to have their voices heard by the correct people. With the creation of the DEI chair position, we hope that this will provide a clear liaison for GSAS students, which will ensure that matters will be followed up on and those in question will be held accountable. The DEI Chair opens another avenue for reporting other than with Ombuds, EOAA, or the Office of Gender Based Misconduct. The DEI chair is a student advocate who will receive concerns students may have and if requested, will bring the issues to the appropriate people in higher administration. ASGC is currently working toward implementing reporting methods that will provide anonymity and prevent retaliation against students who decide to speak out.

During the position’s first year, ASGC was able to accomplish a few notable items. ASGC disbursed a total of eight Diversity Initiative Grants, totalling almost $8000, spanning from nature hikes with students from nearby neighborhoods to workshops focused on anti-bias and anti-racist language pedagogy. A working document has been created to centralize and delineate what the bare minimum requirements should be integrated into every department, such as forming a DEI task force that includes both faculty and students. Additionally, those who receive an adjusted rate due to Disability Services accommodations now have that adjustment made explicitly clear in their lease agreements, which relieves stress and confusion when paying monthly statements.

As a student representative body, we hold great responsibility and accountability for the well-being of all our constituents. Having that in mind, we are aware of the continuous discrimination and injustice towards specific members of our community. ASGC recognizes that we have also been complicit in perpetuating systemic injustice, both directly and indirectly. For example, due to clerical reasons and lack of flexibility, the Students of Color Alliance (SoCA) was removed as an ASGC-recognized student group for a short time in 2018; ASGC is committing to removing administrative and bureaucratic hurdles that can disproportionately affect underrepresented students and student groups and their success at Columbia.

Additionally, ASGC also recognizes that awarding travel and student initiative grants evenly across the board to requestees can have disproportionate effects, which we will consciously take into account for future disbursement. Moving forward, we must actively work against institutionalized discrimination and racism; we pledge to continue to provide strong advocacy for all GSAS students, but especially for our underrepresented students and those particularly treated unfairly within our University system.

There is much more to be done, and ASGC’s work does not end with the action items above.
We invite GSAS students to be in contact with either your departmental representative or the Executive Board to share ways that we can collectively continue to support and foster an anti-racist community here at Columbia. This statement is not meant to be unchangeable or static; ASGC will work as diligently as necessary to ensure that this document is always adjusting its positionality to match the current specific sociopolitical context and is regularly reviewed and formally approved by members of our community.

In solidarity,
The Arts and Sciences Graduate Council