

GSG Assembly Meeting



Date: 4 March 2025

I. Call to Order

- Quorum Count – completed

II. GSG Updates

- Introduce the New Executive Board
 - VP: Ideas for initiatives to improve the graduate community come to her; can get coffee
 - President and Treasurer not in attendance today
 - VPIA: Clarified attendance policy, transition meetings for GSG
 - AA: Survey results coming out soon; committee and can meet assembly members
 - ISA: New officer, new administration, visa issues, funding
 - Sec: Introductions, initiatives
 - Soc: happy hour and events
 - SpEC: Battle of the bands last Friday, this Friday lucky affair party
 - Heidi Freeman: student affairs and adviser for GSG
 - Comms: New GSG newsletter design, images and links, advertise your events there
 - DEI: events this year, adviser-advisee trainings
 - VP: Expectations for Assembly will improve because will send out minutes within the 48-hour period following Assembly
- Petition for Protections (15 Minutes)
 - Clément introduces petition regarding recent political climate of international students
 - Petition: <https://www.jotform.com/form/250584705175157#preview>
 - Hunter Akridge, G1 in Anthropology, working with a group of students and post-docs and lack of substantive messaging receiving from the grad school

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- Funding being targetted by Executive actions from Trump administration, NIH, NSF (two largest sources of federal funding for Princeton) cuts discussed among congressional republicans
- Government shutdown might further stymie funding allocations
- International students have employment insecurity, visa processing more arduous because of cuts to consular stuff and increased immigration hurdles
- Allow international students to take on external teaching and work while at Princeton
- Increase engagement with international students on how to respond to challenges from the new administration
- Guaranteed transitory funding mechanism – allow students who have lost funding for reasons outside their control one semester to find other options
- Increase resource for international students en par with MIT, JHU in facing visa challenges, financial equity and subsidies for having to return home during processing, free legal services, commitment to academic freedom
- Support to post-docs in active bargaining with university
- Clément: petition can raise awareness and connect community, advocate for change at the institutional level; endorses initiative for Assembly consideration
- Question/Suggestion from Assembly: Timely renewal of visas, if not renewed how to continue in the programme; legal aid for continuing work during lapses in visas for remote work and relieve some of residency requirements until visa renewed
- Comment from Assembly: endorsement, longtime demands among grad students
- Comment from Plasma: DoE cuts, insider petition or ask for written promises from university in the event of adversity from federal policies; guaranteed protections; no DEI materials inside cubicles for a few days until some clarification about university protections
 - Akridge: Asks Princeton to stand up for academic freedom, some specific asks on DEI not explicitly raised, but protect students from harms can anticipate
- Plasma: Better clarification in petition of what guarantees this would offer to safeguard students and faculty from having to leave
 - Akridge: Petition framed to maximize inclusivity

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- SPIA: Are master's students covered as graduate workers and part of this?
 - Akridge: Yes, and so are undergrads
 - English: Work of English department might be characterised as DEI, lacklustre response from university over DEI policies; calls initiative to a vote; meeting with grad school on similar issues
 - VP: Scan QR code and collect questions and concerns :
<https://docs.google.com/document/u/0/d/1-jf-L7yVWqRF0MYQgRAIPqIYA3lwt4XcYdhFFWHNALM/mobilebasic>
 - Called to a vote and seconded (27-0-0):
 - Y - 27
 - N - 0
 - A - 0
 - Adopted by unanimity.
- Financial Freedom Initiative (Alejandra Almonte, Hein Mante and Caridad Estrada)
 - 403(b) – savings account for retirement and compound over time, tax advantaged (no taxes on gains until retirement)
 - Educational equivalent of a 401(k)
 - Advances over IRA: If acute need for money, can take loan out from 403(b) and repay yourself over time without large tax hits, more flexibility to use savings how you would like, savings higher than IRAs, more widely recognized internationally by tax treaties
 - Yale retirement plan costs \$40 per person / year
 - Question: Employer match what you put into a 401(k), but Princeton is not matching; we choose how the funds are invested, not the university
 - VP: Post-docs have a plan, ask for extension to grad students
 - Question: Rolled over into other retirement plans
 - Question: Opt-in only? Or all students?
 - VP: Do not yet know the amount it would be and if the Grad School would cover, but optimistic Grad School would hopefully cover this fee en par with peer institutions
 - Question: If we have a 401(k) from a previous job, how could we carry over or have the plans co-exist?
 - A: Can be combined or carried over similar to other plans.

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- Comment: Center that offers students counselling about financial literacy
 - VP: Yes, some coordination with this office Scott ? on part of plan
 - Q: Suggests adding info on literacy classes offered into the plan
- Post-docs have an opt-out system and everyone contributes 5% of salary unless opt out, but maybe grad students prefer an opt-in system, should be workable with preferred system of grad students when we know more about the university's contributions to the programme.
- VP: Slack channel for answering questions as they arise.

III. Open Forum

- SPIA: Is there a centralized space for viewing ongoing initiatives?
 - VP: Slack channel of GSG initiatives, VPIA initiative to have Board come every other assembly meeting to provide an update and receive questions or feedback from the Assembly. Forum for announcements to be posted. Assembly channel of Slack contains links to committees.
 - SPIA: Helpful to reference a document about ongoing initiatives.
 - VP: Comms is updating the website with these.
- Motion to adjourn

END OF ASSEMBLY MEETING 18:57