

GSA Meeting Agenda

Date: April 6, 2022

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://umaryland.zoom.us/j/95332633899>



1. Welcome/Call to order:

Please put your full name and program in the Zoom chat so attendance can be taken!

For this meeting, please indicate whether you are the primary, alternate, or extra rep or a guest!

2. Review minutes of previous meeting

a. Motion to approve minutes:

3. Reports

a. **President** - Sydney Ashton (umb.gsa.president@gmail.com)

i. March 31st was International Transgender Day of Visibility!

1. Check out [Baltimore Safe Haven](#) to support and for resources! They're hosting the [Baltimore Trans Pride](#) block party on June 4th, 2022

ii. The Graduate Research Conference was a huge success! Thank you Hadley & congratulations to all who presented and received awards!

iii. KN95s now available for pick-up at the following locations (no appointment necessary!):

1. GRID (HS/HSL 3rd floor)
2. Student Affairs Suit (SMC Campus Center 3rd floor)
3. GPILS Offices (BRB 1-005)
4. Graduate School Offices (Lexington Building 1110G)
5. → Thanks so much for filling out the last minute survey on this topic!

iv. In addition to the new [Meet & Confer](#) page on our website, there's also a new welcome page that should go live soon that has some general information about how meetings work, responsibilities of the E-board members and program representatives, etc.

b. **Vice President** - Rainer Butler (umb.gsa.vp@gmail.com)

i. USGA Update

1. SFAB and Student Affairs met regarding student fees and SFAB was supportive of increasing the student fees (based on state government mandate on increase in state salaries, and state funds only cover state employees, not all the employees). Student affairs presented and noted that student fees were not requested to be increased for 6 years
 - a. Increase will not cover all costs (?) Student Affairs is pursuing other avenues to cover costs (due to increase in minimum wage, auxiliary services, losses from pandemic, etc.)
 - b. <https://www.umaryland.edu/umb-student-affairs/about-us/student-fee-advisory-board/>
2. Issues with shuttle?
 - a. Such as being late, driving issues, etc
 - b. <https://www.umaryland.edu/shuttlebus/suggestions/>
3. Masks/covid tests made available -

GRID

HS/HSL, Third Floor

The Grid is on the north side of 3rd floor of the HS/HSL. Take the elevator to level 3 and immediately take a left and follow the stacks to the end of the hall until you see the Grid sign. The masks will be on the table right outside of the Grid Office.

Contact Taylor DeBoer with questions: taylor.deboer@umaryland.edu; 443-421-7699

Student Affairs Suite

SMC Campus Center

Third Floor

Masks are located at the front desk inside the Student Affairs Suite

Contact Angela Jackson with questions: 410-706-7766 | angela.jackson@umaryland.edu

GPILS Administrative Offices

655 W. Baltimore Street

Suite 1-005

Graduate School Administrative Offices

Lexington Building

620 West Lexington Street

Outside Room 1110G

Or contact your program's Graduate Program Coordinator or Director

- ii. Social happening Thursday April 28th at Pickles
 - 1. Free food and drinks! Reminders will be sent out closer to the date.
- c. **Treasurer** - Gillian Mbambo (umb.gsa.treasurer@gmail.com)
 - i. GSA Balances:
 - 1. Checking account Balance is \$16499.97
 - a. Waiting for Global Fellowship deposit (\$5000)
 - 2. Venmo - \$0 (transferred to the bank)
 - 3. Cashbox: \$2473
 - ii. Awards and Disbursements
 - 1. Travel Awards (transfer funds from 1st quarter)
 - a. 1st Quarter - No apps (\$1500 remaining)
 - b. 2nd Quarter - 3 recipients (\$741 remaining)
 - c. 3rd Quarter - 5 recipients (\$0)
 - d. 4th Quarter - 7 recipients (\$2100)
 - i. Rollover funds from 2nd and 1st quarter awards
 - 2. Global Travel Fellowship (\$750 max and \$5000 available)
 - a. Receiving a high volume of inquiries/interest
 - 3. Other
 - a. Professional development and Research awards - deposited to student account
 - i. Waiting for Research Award receipts
 - b. GRC reimbursement - complete
- d. **Secretary** - Hadley Bryan (umb.gsa.sec@gmail.com)
 - i. Sign in- please put your name, email, program, and primary/alternate/extra rep in the chat!

- ii. A USGA senator is working on a report of COVID policies in higher ed.

<http://bit.ly/COVIDreportcard>

This is the link to their Twitter if you're interested in learning more about the group: <https://mobile.twitter.com/covidsafecampus>

e. **Grad Council Rep** - Nikita Aggarwal (umb.gsa.gcrep@gmail.com)

- i. Outstanding mentor award applications are out. Deadline approaching soon .
- ii. Professional developmental award extended to those attending conferences/other educational events for networking.

f. **Public Relations** - Jenn Kirk (umb.gsa.pro@gmail.com)

- i. Submit any stories or commentary for the grad gazette:
<https://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/gsa/gazette/submit/>
- ii. Communications subcommittee
 - 1. Still need GSA Rep support
 - 2. [Link to subcommittee sign-up sheet](#)

g. **Meyerhoff**

- i. Still working on finding a new representative

h. **NOVA**

- i. We are currently planning this year's Brain Awareness Week school visits - look out for more info soon!

i. **Graduate School DEI Committee** - Nikita Aggarwal

Updates from the graduate school.

1. We are actively working on 5-year EDI strategic plan . the plan was presented at the end of the February during a graduate school retreat.
2. The committee members are working on several projects focused on sense of belonging—analysis of faculty, staff, student climate surveys, brainstorming communication strategies, including an EDI newsletter, learning from other schools regarding ongoing strategies for sharing experiences and concerns, working on a project offering inclusive pedagogy strategies for GS faculty, and working with leadership on accountability structures around EDI

j. **Program Rep Updates/Questions/Concerns**

i.

4. Old Business:

a. Old announcements

- i. UMB Food Pantry is up & running! [Click here](#) to place an order for pickup in the SMC Campus Center
- ii. New GRID space is open in the HS/HSL library
- i. We have a new travel award called the [GSA Global Travel Fellowship](#), sponsored by the UMB Center for Global Engagement. Apply through August 31st!
- ii. Meet & Confer information and past meeting minutes can now be accessed [on the GSA website](#)

5. New Business:

a. Meet & Confer updates

Meet and Confer is a committee of students chaired by the GSA President that meets monthly with Dr. Bruce Jarrell (UMB President), Dr. Roger Ward (Interim Provost, Executive Vice President & Dean of the Graduate School), Dr. Erin Golembewski (Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School) and other campus leadership

- i. Last meeting occurred February 3rd (postponed January meeting). Our February meeting was canceled
- ii. GERO stipends
 1. UMBC and UMB have agreed to adopt the NIH minimum (~25k)
 2. GPILS is conducting an internal review of the gerontology program at-large, including its stipend, and will “make further recommendations on what, if any, increases both campuses are able to support”
 3. Issues seem to be that 1) UMBC is concerned about the equity within their graduate programs if they raise GERO stipends higher than any of their other programs and 2) while tuition remission is funded as an employee benefit at UMB, UMBC requires the PI to fund the tuition remission of their students
- iii. COLA/bonuses
 1. We asked why the cost of living adjustments and bonuses awarded to [all USM employees](#) do not apply to UMB graduate assistants (even though graduate assistants at other USM institutions did and regularly do receive these!)
 2. Drs. Lilly and Ward informed us that UMB GAs are considered “students”

and not “employees”

- a. Asserted that they don’t rely on USM/state executive orders regarding COLAs to update UMB stipends
- b. Reasoning seems to be that people supported by T32 training grants cannot be state employees, so it’s easier to classify GAs as “students” to ensure the university can continue to rely on T32 support
- c. Asserted that the “student” status is a benefit: “students” receive more credit hours of tuition remission than employees and “students” are exempt from paying FICA taxes

iv. Remainder was a discussion regarding the efficacy of the Meet and Confer process

1. We prepared a presentation on the purpose of Meet & Confer, some examples of topics addressed through this process and their outcomes and some ideas for how to improve the Meet & Confer process
2. Administration did not receive this well. Responses included:
 - a. Assertion that the M&C process has gotten “murky” over the years; should be about issues specific to GAs, not graduate students in general
 - b. Assertion that they meet with us more than any other group on campus
 - c. Listed things they feel have been accomplished together through the M&C process, including increasing library hours
 - d. Emphasized that assisting in the decision-making process does not mean making the decision
3. If you have any thoughts regarding Meet & Confer, how it can be improved or how we as the GSA could better advocate for graduate students, please see our [survey](#) or email me!

b. USMSC Updates

The University System of Maryland Student Council meets monthly and includes two representatives from each USM Institution (UMB’s are the GSA and USGA Presidents)

- i. Last meeting occurred March 13th
 1. Chancellor Perman attended, spent a lot of time on introductions but some of the topics we discussed were:
 - a. Supporting students transitioning from community college to a MD 4-year university
 - b. Mental health
 - i. Chancellor Perman said the mental health challenges students at USM institutions are facing are not due to the

USM's reluctance to spend money, but rather because of the national shortage of mental health providers

- ii. USM representative focused a lot on giving "students more agency to help themselves" through things like peer-mentoring
- iii. Myself and the UMBC graduate representative brought up that an underlying unaddressed issue for graduate students is the issues they often experience caused by their PI and the lack of faculty accountability

2. The USMSC is going to formally support the collective bargaining bill

- ii. Next meeting is April 10th

c. Campus Safety

- i. Last Citizens Advisory Board meeting occurred March 21st
- ii. Begun discussing the results from the campus safety survey
 - 1. I presented campus safety data re-analyzed by role (faculty, student, staff) and School at UMB; we got through about half of the survey questions and will discuss the remainder at our April meeting
 - 2. Overall, about 26% of respondents said they feel unsafe on campus daily, weekly or monthly. Only ~28% said they never feel unsafe
 - 3. Talked a lot about the "perception" of safety—have to do with foot traffic? Daylight?
 - a. Discussed that foot traffic in the campus area is much lower than pre-pandemic, because there are fewer restaurants/ball games/conferences/etc. in addition to more UMB community members working from home
 - 4. Security and police officer visibility: responses ranged a lot here! Seems to be really location-, day- and time-dependent
 - a. Many people have advocated for a "Hopkins" model, which would entail placing staffed permanent security booths visibly around campus. Pros and cons to this approach
 - 5. Identified that the vast majority of incidents on campus are not reported to UMBPD; lots of factors that affect this

- iii. Next meeting March 7th

d. UMB Shuttle

- i. Meeting occurred March 7th but I was not notified of this
 - 1. Jan. meeting abruptly canceled without explanation, and then the entire Zoom series was similarly canceled without explanation. They finally responded to my emails after almost 2 months when I escalated, but did not provide any information

2. Still waiting for ridership data and information about the impending rate increase, rumors about route changes
 - ii. Upcoming meeting should be April 13
- e. GSA Executive Board Nominations
 - i. Procedure:
 1. Nominations will be accepted beginning now through the start of our May meeting (May 4th at 5 PM)
 2. Any representative may nominate themselves or another representative for a position. Each nomination must be seconded by an additional representative
 3. If nominated, you can verbally accept your nomination here during our meeting, or by emailing Sydney Ashton at umb.gsa.president@gmail.com
 - a. Please reach out to any of us if you have any questions about our positions and what they entail!
 4. Voting:
 - a. Will occur at our May meeting
 - b. We will vote in order of position. Each nominated representative will have a few minutes to address the GSA Body with brief comments regarding why they are interested in the position, any goals they would have within the position, etc.
 - ii. Positions:
 1. President:
 2. Vice President:
 3. Treasurer:
 4. Secretary:
 5. Public Relations:
 6. GRC Rep

6. Upcoming Events:

- a. GSA Exec Elections: May Meeting

Date of next meeting: May 4, 2022

Motion to adjourn: