

GSA EC Meeting Minutes

August 02, 2021

4:00 pm - 5:00pm PST

Zoom

This meeting is moderated by GSA President Jordan Collignon. Minutes of the meeting have been prepared by GSA Internal Communications Officer Benny Nguyen.

Members of Executive Council in Attendance

- Jordan Collignon (President)
- Aislinn Beam (Internal Vice President)
- Zunaira Iqbal (External Vice President)
- Benny Nguyen (Internal Communications Officer)
- Sara Downs (Treasurer)
- Azin Shamshirgaran (Climate, Diversity, Equity Officer)
- Arya Rajan (International Affairs Officer)
- Arabi Seshappan (Solidarity Officer)

Guests

- Becky Mirza (Ass. Director for International Students and Scholars)
- Lacey Long-Vejar (International Student Visa Specialist)
- Maria Nishanian (Graduate Academic Counselor)

Graduate Academic Counselor (Maria Nishanian)

- Maria supports & helps students navigate resources on campus to meet their needs, academically, financially, or otherwise.
- Works closely with Graduate Division
- Counseling support (both 1-on-1 and group)

- Advisor-advisee relations, time-management, etc.
- Note: certain issues may need to be reported, if fully confidential resources are needed, Maria can direct accordingly
- Certified mediator for any conflict (e.g. advisor-advisee relations, academic progress, etc.)
- Academic counselor not therapist!

International Student Shuttle Service (Becky Mirza, Lacey Long-Vejar)

- A shuttle is not planned this year
- Grad. Div and GSA in the past have organized a ride service, the International Student Office have supported primarily via communication
- As far as this year, we're a touch late, as students have already begun traveling to Merced, approximately ~40 graduate students from overseas total
 - As of today, 11 known students have already arrived
 - 18 have already booked flights + communicated to the International Office
 - Most days ~1-2 students arrive, not entirely known which airports students are flying into
- Previously, a shuttle has not been booked
 - Instead, other rental services were used (Enterprise, Fleet Service/TAPS)
 - Using TAPS' Fleet would eschew issues of personal liability & insurance
 - Using personal cars poses some issues of risk & insurance, contact Risk Services for advice
- Discussed informal resources where students could solicit help with transportation
- Final Verdict: The GSA will consider messaging to get volunteer drivers, but will not pursue Fleet or other vehicle rental options.
 - GSA representation in GROW planning meetings in the future, so we can properly and formally organize this sort of transportation support in the future

Officer Updates

- Sarah Downs, Treasurer
 - Showed Preliminary Budget, see email attachment
 - Interested in revising the Travel Awards, contact if interested
 - Preliminary ideas: Opening award to attendees, rolling over money
- Jordan Collignon, President
 - Event brainstorm (w/ Sarah)

- Shying away from professional development events since there is large overlap w/ existing, and very comprehensive programs
 - Photo contests
 - Zoom-hangouts: First-year, International Student
 - Concern about re-closing campus
 - 88 responses thus far for events survey!
- Election commission will meet tomorrow
 - Waiting from Tawana Parks, 3rd party organizer, to respond
- Benny Nguyen, Internal Comm.
 - Website, changing so the menu landing pages are not hidden

Fall 2021 GSA Meeting Time:

- Fill out When2Meet by August 16th!

Meeting adjourned at 5:06pm

Next Meeting: Monday, August 16th, 4-5pm PST, Zoom