GSA EC Meeting Minutes

November 09, 2021

4:00 pm - 5:00pm PST

Zoom

This meeting was moderated by GSA President  Violet Barton. Minutes of the meeting have been prepared by GSA Internal Communications, Benny Nguyen.

**Members of Executive Council in Attendance**

* Violet Barton (President)
* Zunaira Iqbal (External Vice President)
* Aislinn Beam (Internal Vice President)
* Azin Shamshirgaran (Climate, Diversity & Inclusion Officer)
* Edgar Perez-Lopez (Undocumented Affairs Officer)
* Arya Rajan (International Affairs Officer)
* Mehdi Masud (Public Relations Officer)
* Binod Bhattarai (Academic Affairs Officer)
* Benny Nguyen (Internal Communications Officer)
* Destina Bermejo (Social Media & Graphic Design Specialist)
* Arabi Seshappan (Solidarity Officer)

**Officer Updates**

Sarah, Treasurer

* Sent Travel award notices
* Allow for retroactive applications
  + Need to reevaluate the process, cap at 45-days
* Awarded GSO and SEO funds; budget met the need

Azin, Diversity & Inclusion Officer

* Met with Asmeret Berhe regarding hosting a workshop or conference, general DEI workshop
  + Need to engage more students/increase turnout, last time we hosted we had only ~10 participants
    - Can field input/questions from students via a survey
* Last year’s was ~1 hour meeting via Zoom
* Draw support from DEI Office who we met w/ last time
* Advertise via...
  + Social Media
  + Tabling
  + Via Delegate Assembly communication channels
* Contact Azin to contribute & help w/ this.

Destina, Social Media & Graphics Design

* Suggestions from Dr. Strayhorn
  + Work with ASUCM for events, specifically for getting into the broader Merced community
* Public Health & Sociology are co-hosting events, want to think about how we foster these interdepartmental collaborations
* Thinking about what the graduate student community wants and needs out of events; in-person? Hybrid? Etc.

Binod, Academic Affairs

* Call for Committee Applications sent out, due 11/15
* Discussed how to select representatives (when more than one intersted)

Aislinn, Internal Vice President

* Should cancel DA meeting on Thursday since it’s Veteran’s Day?
  + Advised against doing so
* During this DA meeting, DA will appoint a Delegate Assembly Chair

Benny, Internal Communications

* CatLife transitioned to Presence, Benny’s working on changing all the links that became invalid due to this transition
* Worked with Binod to launch the call for Committee participation
* Will send a last call for comments on letter to OSI about using Prescence in GSA elections
* Send Benny a biography & picture to update the Officer page!

Arya, International Affairs

* International Student Hangout next Thursday, working to get some snacks and refreshments

Violet, President

* Graduate Council representation, we need to fill the role!
  + Meets every other Tuesday, ~1 - 3 P.M.
    - Next meeting in December
  + Discusses topics such as...
    - Normative time to degree
    - School membership
    - Funding for Master’s students
    - Educational policy in general.
* If interested, send email to Violet w/ your CV
* First UC Merced Alumni Regent ! Need graduate student rep. to be on the selection/search committee
* Met w/ Dean Kello and will request a monthly meeting with Vice Chancellor Nies
  + Extends invitation to all GSA members to sit in on these meetings, will send everyone dates + times
* Thinking about using the newsletter as a space to showcase the work of not only GSA EC members, but also the DA and various committees.
  + Background on the letter: Last year, at the end of each semester, we sent to entire student body a letter as a “progress report” on what each officer accomplished. This year we sent out a letter at the start of the Fall 2021 semester to communicate each officer’s goals for the year/semester. The next letter date is TBD. In the past, officers had full agency over their contributions, and resource communication was always an option
* Give certificates/recognition to acknowledge those who give up their time for service
* Podcast or Library symposium/display to showcase graduate student work
* Retreat for Officers to solidify our plan of action and build community
* Who to talk to w/ regards to COVID restrictions and our various plans
  + Sarah Frey
  + Vice Chancellor Nies
  + Dean Kello
* Toloma 5K Run
  + Social Media posts & possibly a table

**Meeting adjourned at 5:02 PM**

**Next GSA General Meeting 11/16 4 – 5PM, Virtually (next Tuesday!)**

**Next meeting 11/23 at 4 - 5PM, Virtually**