GSO Executive Meeting Minutes: April 23, 2020
Prepared by Erin Conley

In attendance (remotely): Erin Conley, Adryanna Major, Charlie Prior, Collin Malone, Katherine Siler, Elise Le Boulicaut, Baran Bodur, Jay Runge, Ryan Kozlowski

Agenda and notes (actions, tasks, and upcoming events in red):

- Round table discussion of how we are all doing, what we’ve been up to since the last meeting
- Katherine updates:
  - Budget updates:
    - Unused funds from 2019-2020 academic year’s budget will not roll over; Katherine working with Darlene to generate new GSO budget for 2020-2021 academic year
    - Might get GSO fund code
    - Working toward GSO budget similar to 2019-2020 budget with increase to GSS section due to many prelims/defenses; cannot guarantee anything
  - Figuring out how orientation will work considering COVID-19
    - Picnic date tentatively scheduled for August 22; food trucks!
- Election for new GSO officers will proceed in July; Jay will be in charge
- No upcoming in-person events for spring/summer; GSO to consider options for virtual events
- GSO April 2020 wellness survey
  - 20% of responses from GSO officers
  - Class reps could amplify surveys to possibly receive more responses, but usually do not receive responses from their cohort
  - Maybe next survey to include year in grad school?
  - Comparing to previous survey: less fear/uncertainty/lack of motivation, people seem to be settling into COVID life (both good and bad)
- TA training discussion:
  - Semester-long training with no TA responsibilities will not happen this fall
  - Katherine will reach out to Kate/Chris for follow-up on TA training
    - Also communicate that GSO will put together a task force to compile list of goals/solutions to TA training for Kate/Chris
      - Different options for training (e.g., once a week with different sections): good option, better option, optimal option
      - Task force to comprehensively outline curriculum, workload breakdown, courses, supervisors
      - Volunteers: Charlie, Jay, Adryanna, Elise
      - Adryanna/Katherine will send follow-up emails
  - Protocol from other departments:
    - Biology department: don’t TA first two semesters, but have a grant/sponsorship that covers student costs
• Engineering department: integration with certificate of graduate teaching; program set up to do courses in 2nd semester before students start TA, fulfill requirements for teaching with the TA
  • In physics department, students don’t have time to complete prerequisite courses before TA, so they can’t use the TA for the certificate requirement
  • Katherine: engineering has a masters program for the first two years; income stream and setup are different
    o Find an industry sponsor?
    o Notify the Graduate School that teaching certificate doesn’t line up with physics department?
    o Pulling in professors/Ken/Derek to help with TA training:
      ▪ Need to consider what avenue we go down to provide the additional training (i.e., providing additional pay)
      ▪ Might have to find volunteers/do for free
    o Semester-long training held weekly? Would require schedule changes
• Star Party updates
  o Postponed; attempting to reschedule during meteor shower on August 12
  o Ryan already posted flyers before COVID shutdown, and he will tape a new date onto the posters once the shutdown is lifted; Ryan will also advertise on the TV in the physics building
  o New students are welcome to attend if they are available!
• TA survey report update:
  o Asking 1st-3rd years for feedback:
    ▪ Elise: mostly what GSO already talked about; one day over orientation is not enough and overwhelming, also focused on lab
  o Using older TAs to help with TA training:
    ▪ “Professional TAs” who don’t have research funding
    ▪ Ask for grad student volunteers (3rd years?)
• No curriculum updates
• Talking with Jimmy/Barry about storing GSO documents
  o Permanent place to store minutes, survey data, posters, flyers
  o Jay mentioned to Jimmy/Barry; indicated that this could happen
  o Collin: accountability committee has Microsoft Teams page, DukeBox that Barry set up; passed on as the designated storage place
  o GSO can pass ownership on DukeBox, so the box Erin previously set up for GSO can work in this case
  o Adryanna will upload documents she possesses to DukeBox
• Better communication about colloquium speakers being potential hires:
  o Adryanna sent an email to Cristin who redirected Josh S; responded but no plan for the future was set
  o Katherine will check who runs the colloquia, bridge gap with GSO so officers are more in the loop
Regardless of whether the speaker is a potential hire, revise colloquia lunch protocol to increase meaningful discussion, interested participants
  - Follow up with faculty host to generate list of students in speaker’s area of research; invite those students ~week before the lunch
  - Remaining spots in the lunch are then sent ~days before to all students so there’s still an opportunity for anyone to attend
  - Adryanna will contact Achint to see what he thinks of this idea
- Conduct and accountability committee survey postponed on Dr. Bass’ recommendation; will release survey before the end of the summer
- Mentorship award discussion: GSO/students recognizing 1-3 people who are mentors to others in the department, show strong mentorship
  - Adryanna making a few wording changes; will send out edited version ASAP
  - Award versus certificate…
  - Plan to hand out future awards at picnic
  - Voting doesn’t make sense because people have different spheres of influence; use nomination process for all students and GSO selects recipients from those nominated
  - Both chairs’ signature on award; Katherine can get those signatures
- Industry panel updates:
  - No updates, but will be postponed
  - Postponed until fall? Could happen in the summer?
  - Could be virtual? (Easier to get industry panel together, harder to get students interested in attending when there’s no free food…)
- Election discussion
  - Before elections happen, GSO wants to have storage process set up, documents uploaded, schedule of social events
    - Share momentum/trajectory, lessen information loss
  - Nominations will happen soon; Jay will sent out email ASAP
- Graduate student end-of-year survey: Jay is in charge
  - Jay will get in touch with Jon to figure out how to proceed
- Virtual activities:
  - Cookie Time on April 23: litmus test to see how well virtual events work, how GSO should proceed with other virtual events
  - Jackbox party games on Steam: Collin can host virtual game night (limited to 8 people, so either people would sit out between rounds or need to host multiple games at the same time)
    - Host through Zoom or Discord
    - Collin will send out a poll to grads to find the best time to host; depending on responses, might need two separate games
  - Social hours?
    - Anecdotal success with other social hours
    - Cookie Time might be that resource
- Next meeting: Adryanna will send out an email depending on Cookie Time success