

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
  - Find an industry sponsor?
  - Notify the Graduate School that teaching certificate doesn't line up with physics department?
  - 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
  - Semester-long training held weekly? Would require schedule changes
- Star Party updates
  - Postponed; attempting to reschedule during meteor shower on August 12
  - 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
  - New students are welcome to attend if they are available!
- TA survey report update:
  - 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
  - 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
  - Permanent place to store minutes, survey data, posters, flyers
  - Jay mentioned to Jimmy/Barry; indicated that this could happen
  - Collin: accountability committee has Microsoft Teams page, DukeBox that Barry set up; passed on as the designated storage place
  - GSO can pass ownership on DukeBox, so the box Erin previously set up for GSO can work in this case
  - Adryanna will upload documents she possesses to DukeBox
- Better communication about colloquium speakers being potential hires:
  - Adryanna sent an email to Cristin who redirected Josh S; responded but no plan for the future was set
  - 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