

GSO Executive Meeting Minutes: July 8, 2020
Prepared by Erin Conley

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

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

- Virtual orientation
 - August 14: presentation or panel session for GSO
 - Try to have one grad student per 3-4 incoming students
 - GSO president gives spiel about what GSO does
 - Use Zoom breakout rooms to initiate small group discussions?
 - Know answers to frequently asked questions (e.g., what does the fall semester look like?)
 - Idea to be welcoming toward incoming grad students:
 - 10-15 current graduate students pledge to attend – need to find volunteers!
 - Current grad students give 60-90 second blurb about who they are, their research interests, their hobbies and favorite things to do in Durham
 - Rough schedule: current grad students' spiels, GSO introduction, breakout rooms with mentors/current students
 - Potentially rotate breakout rooms to meet more people
 - Also have a virtual informal gathering to welcome the incoming students?
 - Can't be during the week of August 14 – too busy!
 - Maybe during Cookie Time? Add an agenda?
 - ~2nd week of classes: separate presentation to explain GSO
 - First years need to pick a representative
 - Broad, simple information about GSO (5-10 minutes)
 - Assigning mentors to incoming grad students:
 - Match by research interest; assign as quickly as possible
 - Goal: have mentors assigned by August 14
 - Professor of the year should still happen!
 - Charlie will work on that
 - Don't quite know how that will happen...
- Elections for new GSO officers (Jay)
 - Planning to hold elections at end of July/beginning of August
 - Jay to begin nomination period soon
 - Class representatives must be from that class/year!
- End of year survey
 - Survey is written up; covers summer courses
 - Can be sent at any point
 - Pizza or some other incentive (probably not a gift card)? Something virtual?
- Conduct and accountability council updates (Collin/Tyler)

- How will the representatives be chosen?
 - Collin and Tyler volunteered, but depending on interest there might need to be elections?
 - Supposed to be appointed by GSO president, so it will ultimately be up to the next GSO executive committee
- Sending a reminder on how to submit complaints, the process, who is available to talk to, etc., on July 17
- Climate survey for undergraduates to better understand why Duke has so few physics undergrads, why they don't stay in the community, understand our level of inclusiveness – planned for this summer
- Increasing diversity in STEM
 - What is the physics department doing as a whole? How can the cosmology group coordinate with the department?
 - International students presenting/making food from their country as a way to share where they're from and who they are
 - Share point of view of different people, open up different discussion platform other than physics
 - Annual targeted recruitment (Tyler attending unofficially for the department): Pratt hosts a STEM boot camp for underrepresented minority undergrads
 - Panels over several days
 - Increased physics presence would be great and benefit the students
 - Multi-prong the outreach into campus groups
 - Reach out to Roxanne or Calvin to host an event, speak to students for 30 minutes about working with other initiatives
 - Affecting undergrads and better understand why undergrads leave physics
 - Connect with HBCUs – talk with Diane Markoff at NC State, Steffen
 - Seminar series? Invite underrepresented minorities to speak about their research?
 - Talk with Darlene about helping with this; she's very active in the community and has many ideas
 - Tyler and Adryanna (maybe Charlie) to write up resources, ideas and names, different initiatives; pass onto the next GSO committee
- Other ideas for the incoming graduate students (any in-person event must have less than 10 people AND must have prior approval from Duke)
 - Virtual tour of campus (15 minutes)
 - Might already exist
 - Could also make one for the department – have students who are allowed on campus film it
 - Mentors could meet in person with mentees if they are willing and comfortable – cannot file for reimbursement (on hold)
 - Ryan's tips and tricks document for incoming graduate students
- Curriculum updates
 - Meeting at the beginning of May in Zoom
 - Main point: placement tests for the incoming class

- Make sure committee knows what the test is going to be, then communicate to students about the content
 - Be clear about expectations
 - No discussion since
- TA in person? Will TAs have a choice between online versus in-person classes?
 - Baran sent an email to Kate – too soon to tell but preferences will be taken into account
- **Next meeting:** just after elections (~early August)? Invite the new officers?