RGSA Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2013
10:30am - 11:30am


A meeting of the current RGSA Executive Leadership and (most) of the 2013-14 Leadership!

Talking with Carolyn & Kimberly regarding RGSA Involvement in New Student Orientation and with the On-going Changes to Graduate Program

-RSENRR Orientation: Planning happens over summer. Orientation will occur the Wednesday before the start of classes. It will be great to have as many people from the RGSA leadership there as possible – and anyone else from RGSA who wants to help. Christine will be the main contact for this.

-Faculty Liaison for RGSA: Kimberly has recommended having a faculty person in this position. How much the RGSA will need him/her is up to us. But it will be good to have an ally from the faculty on this. Sarah will be following up with Kimberly about this. Kimberly’s recommendation was to call past graduate students for nominations. Then ask the faculty member if he/she is interested, as not everyone would agree to it even if they are invited to it. RGSA will brainstorm what the role of this person would be and work on this agenda item next year.

-RGSA Exec Team spoke with Kimberly about what we can do to help get opinions out there about the new model. Kimberly’s response was that she would like as much input as possible – so whatever RGSA leadership can do to elicit responses to potential models will be great. Of course, changes to the program will take a lot of time, and it will likely not directly impact people who are currently grad students, but the input is needed.

Stalking with Deane Wang about Changes to the School Affairs Committee

- Deane has some draft language around changes to the Student Affairs Committee. This committee was dormant for about 7 years before it was recently picked back up again. The proposed change is to re-name the Committee: Social Capital and Sustainability Committee (SCSC – or SC² perhaps?).
- The structure will also change, to have three students on the committee: a grad student, an undergrad student, and one of the Rubenstein Stewards.
- These changes are about moving toward an equity in governance and moving towards more inclusive planning on “Community” events. This is an effort of trying to live the talk of sustainability – which includes equity.
- Another possible change to how this committee can fit into the current structure of meetings and governance is to have the Faculty Meeting be split into meetings specifically
about curricula (which would still be only faculty), and then other meetings that are non-curriculum oriented.
- This can all result in the SCSC planning two meetings each year of the whole community to have a kind of “town hall style” forum.

- These changes will mean a change to the by-laws of RSENR (which are voted on by the faculty. Deane hopes this vote will happen May 14th.

- The RGSA leadership team formerly endorsed this motion by Deane, and said we'll do whatever we can to show our support. It is a great step towards moving from just having someone be a “listener” on faculty meetings (The RGSA vice-Pres/Aiken Chair right now) to having someone with more say in shared governance.

Action Steps on the Social Capital and Sustainability Committee:
First – approve the name and structure change by the faculty through a change in the RSENR by-laws.
Then, the RGSA can figure out if the person on this committee is elected separately (which will require a vote in the fall) or if it is added to the duties of an officer, which will require the grad students to vote in the fall as it would be a change to the RGSA’s own by-laws.

End of Year BBQ:
We are going to go “Gucci” on y'all for the BBQ – Good quality hamburgers, turkey sausage, veggie burgers, hot dogs/not-dogs, and refreshments. Come on, come all.

Report from Dean Erickson’s presentation on undergraduate curricular reform.
Nathan and Jeff O'Donnell went to the meeting Jon Erickson about reforms to the undergrad program and summarized some of the main points that would be relevant to graduate students:

Dean Erickson’s May 2nd presentation outlined ongoing discussions about improvements to the undergraduate curriculum. The main topic of interest to grad students involved teaching resources. As discussed at the Dean's Forum, Dean Erickson reported on an analysis showing that eight percent of Rubenstein teaching resources are currently allocated to the graduate program. In order to achieve balance with the undergrad program and strengthen the grad program, the Dean would like to see this figure increase to twenty percent, allowing for more 300-level classes and support for new initiatives in graduate education. Dean Erickson also mentioned the ongoing discussions about expanding/reforming the Master’s program, including consideration of a professional Master’s, a cohort-based model, and an online option.