RGSA Meeting Minutes
3/12/15
Present: Stephanie Juice, Xiao Xiao, Rezwana Zafar, Ari Cano, Bess Perry, Alexandra Millar, Marcella Dent, Emil Tsao

Dean’s Forum

Loss of the graduate lounge
Ambivalence about the loss of the graduate lounge -- at what point was it decided that it was going to be taken away; at the beginning of last fall? RGSA surveyed the use of the space. The only computers that are connected to a printer in an enclosed space are in the graduate lounge -- what computers should grad students use? Can we meet with students who regularly use the space and think about what is really being lost with that space being taken over? Lost: a private space that does not require being booked -- professional/research related research questions? 4-6 people use it on a daily basis? Could 308G be a substitute -- there are noise concerns, however. Spear St. seems to be complicated -- far away, defeats the cohort experience, different research fields than some grad students.

● Email graduate students to ask for their thoughts on the loss of the room

Townhall Meeting
There’s a board downstairs in Aiken where you can post the topics you want to talk about -- we can put more sticky notes asking about the grad student lounge.

Graduate curriculum
Kimberly suggested that RGSA could compile concerns or ideas about the curriculum and give them to Kimberly. How do we want to approach this? We could survey the grad students and create a database about all of the possible courses around campus. Confusing for incoming grad students to get the resources that they need. Basic RSENR-suited classes seem lacking -- applied statistics? Each advisor has a potential method they want students to know, and maybe there could be a seminar course that features a different method each week. Why can’t 385 be more of an introduction to the school, including professors’ methods? Did we feel like we had a mechanism to give critical feedback on RSENR courses? It would be really important to have a graduate level seminar (with appropriate level content) in RSENR that offers breadth (through weekly method seminars) and depth (through advisors). What’s available to support the individual who seeks a particular path out (database?), but also from the school for structural support (seminar?).
Two themes: 1) We want to be able to give critical feedback to Kimberly and the Dean’s office; 2) We want a database of all of the possible courses around UVM.
Possible solutions: Survey for grad student experience with courses, lack of courses, content gaps, what’s available, etc. Asking GSS what their experience is with this because we’re struggling with how to meet grad student needs.

● Survey grad students about experience with existing courses inside and outside RSENR, lack of content areas, and seminar interest in methods/ethics.