



MINUTES

Attendees:

Nikita Mehta
Kimberley Liu
Joseph Solis
Rebecca Delay
Olivia Purra
Jo Griffin
Joe Reda
Sophia Horigan
Indranil Ghosh
Zhengyuan Ling
Kayla Jones
Briana Banks
Bishwa Pandey

Meeting Start Time: 8:00 am.

Introduction of New Parliamentarian

Nikita introduced Bishwa as the new graduate council parliamentarian to the executive committee. She outlines the scope of the parliamentarian role, which includes taking and circulating notes for the GC Exec meetings, and the all-GC meeting. Additionally, he will assist the VP of Ops and VP of Internal Communications with their work of updating the website and placing orders for hoodies. Should other VPs require his assistance for note taking at their meetings they are welcome to check with Bishwa regarding his availability.

Student Safety and the Recent Incident On-Campus

Zhengyuan asked if the GC board would be releasing a statement on the shooting incident that occurred on 11/9/2021.

Nikita felt that the board would not be able to draft and present a compassionate and thoughtful response to the incident and did not want to populate student's inbox with another generic email. Kim suggests a forum for the friends of the deceased to help them share their grief and come together at this time, asks Zhengyuan for any other ideas. Joe highlights there will be a grief sharing community health session soon to discuss these issues if we can build on that for coming weeks.

MINUTES

Memo for the Wellness Center

Nikita says the overall student wellness experience is positive and the atmosphere in the center is extremely warm and friendly. She says that Fredrick, the Chief Happiness Officer is great and ensures everyone leaves satisfied with the care they receive.

However, she brings up the rough draft of the memo to the wellness center that will discuss the pros and cons of the student experience in dealing with the new student wellness center. She highlights that Booth students contacted her stating that while trying to book appointments their call was forwarded to a call center with high wait times to connect with an individual.

Olivia pointed out that the online booking system, while a good feature is not executed properly. She points out that the online booking system does not let you book an appointment on that platform unless you have previously seen a physician.

Joe points out that he has spoken to the managers at Student Wellness who have said that they are upgrading their operations to account for more walk-ins to combat the online booking troubles. He also corroborates the problems faced by others with appointment bookings. He said there are times when people are told they will receive a return call from the center, but don't. He also highlights that the 24/7 on-call therapist wait times are often over 20 minutes, which isn't good if the need is urgent. Bishwa pointed out that counselling session wait times are over one-month long online which is also a longer than needed time. Nikita says this might be because student counselling, which was a separate entity earlier, is now under the wellness center's umbrella.

Joe was scheduled to meet with the managers at Student Wellness on 11/11/2021 and said he would raise the problems with appointment bookings and the call center.

Nikita asks Joe and Sophia to help with the memo to flesh it out before it is circulated.

Transport in and around campus

Nikita asks Jo Griffin to look at the transport and safety program.

She suggests we ask for more coverage of the Lyft rides for students, both in terms of days of the week and geo-radius. An idea for Metra ride subsidies was already pitched and needed to be followed up on.

A point was raised to help provide students with a student pass for unlimited rides on CTA and Metra similar to what Northwestern University provides.

Nikita has received communication from Booth Students saying they would like a shuttle to downtown. Natalie points out that last month there was a glitch in the Lyft app that allowed students to book rides all around the city without a barrier. This was we will have a months' worth of data to see the demand



MINUTES

for rides from campus to downtown from Lyft before we pitch the idea of a shuttle from Hyde Park to downtown.

Nikita points out that the Lyft system of offering rides on limited days was directed to undergrads who would by and large be on campus and needed the rides on those days. However, there will be a petition from the GC to expand it to all days of the week.

There was a discussion on the shuttle services. The consensus of the board is that the shuttle services are infrequent, and the drivers tend to not stop at the designated stops. There will be a request made for more regular shuttles and a training of the drivers to ensure standardization of stops across all routes.

Administrative topics

Nikita brings up the website updates that are pending. Joseph says the updates should be done in this week and the updated data should be with the team soon. Looking through the groups Nikita highlights the groups that need to be updated. Separately, Kim will be sending the updated byelaws to the group and will then upload them to the website.

Discussing the administrative budget, Nikita says the budget allocation for the year has been made. The entire budget has been accounted for and this might be the first time the budget will be used completely. A question was raised that the budget spending for this quarter is only at \$3000 out of a potential \$21,000. Nikita explains that they are on-course to exhaust the allocation over the year based on the current expenses.

There was a discussion to re-allocate the RPD budget from \$130,000 to account for increased spending in other areas. There will also be a petition for increased funding later in the year for the future.

Graduate Lounge access

Kim and Nikita visited Kevin Bryant who manages the graduate lounge. Kevin is quite strict with enforcing Covid rules and time rules. While discussing the game night idea tabled by Joe, Kevin said he is not comfortable having more than 8 people in one of the reserved rooms and for an after-hours event Kevin suggested this topic be parked for now because he is not comfortable with the operations of the lounge yet to allow for such an event.

The issue of booking rooms was also discussed. At the moment, you can look at rooms available online but have to go to the lounge to book the room in-person which is counterintuitive. This is also difficult because you don't know until you go to the lounge to see if the room is in fact still free.

Lounge timings were discussed. The current timings are not suitable for the PhD students who must work from 9-5 most days. They therefore are unable to use the lounge because the timings entail the



MINUTES

lounge closes at 5:15 since the building shuts at 5:30. A point was raised to highlight that the lounge was to be a space for grad students to create community, but the timings prevent this from happening.

Final updates

- Rebecca will order the sweatshirts and we hope to have them ready for the winter quarter.
- Kim and Nikita meeting with Joseph Merchant on 11/11/2021. Request for VPs to update their slides
- Grad gala has over 500 people on the waitlist with people trying to sell tickets to their friends and asking for ticket name changes. This process will be streamlined for the next Gala event.
- Plan to create a mechanism to combat selling to tickets to friends at higher (read exorbitant) prices.
- Kayla: Recent applications deadline of November 5th saw 6 applications come in, all from Harris.
- Indarnil: Asked if students who are flying to other universities to intern under professors there can ask for the airfare to be covered. This question was tabled for a discussion with Martin.
- Rebecca: Scouting for sites for the Grad Council bonding night and ordering the sweatshirts
- Jo: Launched grad family activity circles last week, had good attendance at both launch events, about 100 people at grad families. Asking her committee to apply to Kayla's fund for the moment to get the program off the ground.
- Joe: Expanded student mental health awareness week to just student wellness week it's happening next week.