Agenda for April 8, 2009

Officers
President—Heather Lee (American Civilization)
VP, Administration—Nitin Jadhav (Engineering)
Treasurer—Anthony Evans (Psychology)
Technology Officer—Stefanie Sevcik (Comparative Literature)
VP, Social—Ratnesh Gupta (Engineering), Sumit Kumar Soni (Engineering)
Secretary—Michael Antosh (Physics)

Attendance: 37 reps of the 61 filled seats; 70 total seats.

I. Approval of the Minutes from the March Meeting
Minutes approved unan

II. Invited Speakers
i. Frances Mantak, Residence Life Subcommittee on Alcohol and Other Drugs
Making sure grads know about health education resources, particularly those relating to alcohol. Confidential appointments available. One goal is to make sure those who don't drink feel comfortable on campus. Suggestion is to make sure there is no perception/expectation of excessive drinking. Check out Brown's health education website.

ii. Jadrian Miles, New GSC Webpage
Better looking, more like rest of Brown’s pages. Made much, much more easy to update. Hoping to add more information for prospective students. Questions/comments can be sent to Jadrian Miles (Jadrian_Miles@brown.edu). New programs to control pictures (flickr) and calendar for the lounge (google calendar). You can (still) sign up for listservs there, starting tonight. The grad student Wiki, linked to the site, still exists and is still the best depository of information from other grad students.

III. Executive Reports and Announcements
i. Election: GSC Self-Study Position (Elena Gonzales, Ryan Hartigan, and Andrew Monroe)
GSC Officers selected 3 finalists. Elena Gonzales – first year Am Civ. from Chicago, National Museum of Mexican Art. Helped museum to be accredited, with a self-study. Analyzed a cultural plan for Providence. If hired, she will gather data from many offices at Brown, then similar sources at Ivy and demographically similar places. She’d investigate types of funding, summer funding, options for additional funding, incentives for external funding, other types of support, transparency of Brown, when grad students are treated as staff, students, etc. Andrew – transfer from Oregon. Master’s in social and quantitative psychology. Worked on designing surveys among other tasks for U of Oregon, helping them to self
study. Would like to increase number of accepted students that attend Brown. Would like to look at conference funding and different departments as well. A good presenter – has presented in conferences at Illinois State, and to those not familiar with his subjects. Ryan – helped start the creation of the position. Has made each GSC meeting in his term, is effective. Interest is to find out if Brown’s high rhetoric will come out in a time of need. Get data for a purpose, make it available and use it to make graduate students more visible on campus. Has already developed a cost of living index using U of Minnesota and Northwestern. Experience – lead the first grouping of grad students at Wellington U, New Zealand (20,000 students). Worked as personal assistant for equivalent of Dean/Vice Provost there, and gained insight. Wants to look at summer teacherships here. Worked in the hotel industry amongst travel crisis. Remember that this is an opportunity for us to increase our voice.

Questions – This could compare with international schools as well (Ryan). GSC will distribute final reports (GSC President). Verification of data – looking at other variables than the numbers is important (Andrew, Elena). Talk to graduate students, statistical analysis, Ryan’s background as theatre directory and lawyer (Ryan). Leadership qualities, for leading the working group of volunteers serving – Elena is very organized, had a team under her at the museum, served on the board of a non-profit in Chicago. Andrew has led many student groups, including one of varying undergrad and master’s students. Uses psychology. Ryan has led in public and private sector. Will know when to sit back and listen, and when to ask for what he needs. Extra time commitments – Andrew enjoys long walks on the beach. Ryan is good at juggling things. Elena has not over-involved herself as a first-year student. All 3 will concentrate on studies through finals.

Debate – we want to present this in the fall. Elected person will basically author the paper, working with the working group, GSC, graduate school, etc. It is information analyzing and gathering. We will use this well into the future. Experience with administration is a plus. Will this have policy implications? The GSC can set the tone for that. Vote: Elena-13, Andrew – 1, Ryan – the rest. Ryan wins. GSC hopes to retain all 3 on the working group.

ii.  
Vote 2: By-Law Addition: Article XXV, Conference Funding
GSC President emphasizes that this gives GSC a bigger voice than only social issues and policy. Questions/comments – rep from Geology talked to students in department. Most of them will not be available for the award, which they are still paying for. Want activities fee to pay for activities. President states that GSC has more than enough money to spend on both. GSC treasurer reports that money is distributed proportionally among areas of study, that amount has been reduced to
$200 per person, and that many events funded for everyone are often attended by very few. Comment is made that students choose not to attend socials, but not to be ineligible for conference funding, and asks about putting this to a school-wide vote. President has asked for opinions in emails to student body. One rep states that it is the job of reps to know how their department would vote. Departments usually won’t give enough funding for conferences, knowing that graduate school will help. Concerns of dishonesty in applications for funding – has their department funded them? Votes will take care of that. Should there be a clause asking for no funding for those who have some money from department? $200 is not enough for most conferences. How will the number of votes in GSC meetings and number of funded students be capped? Budgets and also evaluations after year 1. Officers can screen funding, since requests are due a week before the meeting. President quotes Ryan H – moments of crisis are defining moments.

Motion to increase funding (back) to $500, which would require a new vote on section 8. Vote: 2 yes, rest no. Comment on verifying requests using advisors – President does not believe that is necessary, with trust.

Vote by section: 1 – pass, 5 no. Section 2 – pass, 1 no. 3 – pass unan. 4 – pass, unan. 6 – pass, 8 no. 7 – pass unan. 8 – pass, 3 no. 9 – pass, 3 no. 10 – pass, 2 no. Motions all pass. (There is no number 5, items will be renumbered).

iii. **Vote 2: Constitutional Amendment: Article VII, External Committees**
Comment that every position will be reelected every year. Reelection is certainly possible. Terms begin when voted in – not a calendar year, we want votes staggered. Vote: section 4 – pass unan. Section 7 – pass unan. Motions both pass.

iv. **Vote 1: Constitutional Amendment: Article III, Officers**
Vote 1 on officers section – purpose is to bring in master’s students. We will vote separately on master’s officer and already existing but unnoted social VPs. VP – pass unan. Master’s pass 2 no. Section 3 – pass 1 no, section 13 pass unan.

v. **University Disciplinary Council Guideline Changes**
Will actually be more generous for protestors, but temporarily tabled. Sexual harassment policies changed to be sensitive to victims. Absolute power of disciplinary board will offset by appeals process of some sort.

vi. **Legal Services: Update**
We have a lawyer! 45% paid for by grad students, 45% undergrads, 10% med students.

vii. **Grad Lounge: Damages, Improvements, and Reservation Policy**
Grad lounge was vandalized at a party, will be fixed – tv cabinet. Consensus that grad lounge should be only reserved by grad students (not undergrads, med students) – only grad student controlled location on campus, prevents request surges from taking times grad students want.

viii. **Spring Ball Volunteers**
We need help running it! 2.5 hour shifts, all volunteers will receive a free dinner. A one-hour training is required, to learn ID checking and how to spot the very drunk.

ix. **Nominations and election for Graduate Speaker (Andrew Posner and Elizabeth Richards)**
They are not at the meeting so we need to have a vote of some sort before next month. There will be some sort of special session to decide this; more information to come.

**IV. Funding Requests:**

i. $400 — *Greek Easter Celebration (Yorgos Papanthanasiou)*
Greeks from Greece and not fraternities, celebrating Easter on spring weekend (April 19) on Pembroke Field. Will be advertised. Eastern Christian celebrates Easter as most important holiday, also continuing more traditions. Homemade food, including lamb, for everyone. Funds from undergrads and the group itself. Vote: pass unanimously.

ii. $243 — *A Day at Brown (Myra Harbin)*
RISE – nonprofit org for children who have been incarcerated, giving them mentors. Bring 20 or so students to campus. Introduce them to academia, and allow them to socialize. Open to the community at large. Money is for a scavenger hunt prize and food. Vote: pass unan.

iii. $400 — *Providence Ronald McDonald Running House Club (Sophie Beal)*
Providence Ronald McDonald House Running House Club – grad student in Portuguese. It is an NGO, for mothers with premature babies who can’t pay for a hotel. Running club runs at Brown. Some money for posters, 3 people from Brown get free entries ($25) – they will be decided in the fall. GSC logo on the T-Shirts. On October 4, Saturday, at 10am. It is a women’s race to promote women’s health. 10 Brown grad students are in the club already. Still open to males to attend. Vote: pass unan.
V. External Committee Reports and Announcements

i. Report: Graduate Council Life-Sciences (Graham Poage)
Grad Council deals with grad student life issues, among other things. Abolished students in Bachelor’s/Master’s at the same time program being considered grad students. Leaves of absence recognized as not current grad students (for candidacy) – there was one leave of absence student listed from 1977, among others. Approved PhD in Sanskrit, Master’s in Economics, other academic programs. Looking at expanding public health (making a new school), computational biology.

ii. Report: NEASC (Nitin Jadhav)
New England Assoc. Of Schools and Colleges – recommendations made to Brown are more summer funding, library facilities for grad students, more administration involvement with GSC (President Simmons asked to attend, since she attends undergrad government meetings). Complete report available soon. We will be accredited, most likely. Head of committee was the President of UPenn.

iii. Election to Diversity Advisory Board (Jacque Amoureux, Emily Farris, Ahsan Hussain, Brian Niblo, and Vismadeb Mazumder)
Nicholas Everage is one rep, we need to elect one more. Vismadeb and Ahsan are only candidates present. Vismadeb is from India, and read about the board during orientation in 2007. He has hoped to be on it since. Was on the minority board in college, has had a nice set of experiences at Brown and has a large set of friends. Ahsan comes from a diverse background in Pakistan, on board of Pakistan Students Association, who aired a film as an event. Was active in undergrad – vice president of international students. Was a resident assistant in undergrad – mentored and organized events for diverse students, 200 at a time. Questions – Ahsan is in a master’s program. Biggest issue – adjusting for new students (Ahsan), interacting changes with academic program (scientists meet few Americans, liberal artists meet few International Students), and mixing students all over the grad school (Vismadeb). Comment that retention rates with race are important too. GSC has a vote on this committee. Vote: Ahsan – 10, Vismadeb – 7.

iv. Election to Computing Advisory Board
Tabled

VI Group Recognition

i. None scheduled

VII. Other News

i. Open floor

ii. Next GSC General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 6, at 7 p.m. in
the Graduate Student Lounge.

iii. Next time: previously elected external committee reps, tone of the Self Study report.
Proposed Additions and Amendment to the Constitution and By-Laws

Constitution:
Article III: Officers
Section 1: The GSC shall elect as its officers a President, a Vice President of Administration, two Vice Presidents of Social Events, a Treasurer, a Secretary, a Technology Officer, and a Master’s Student Advocate.

Section 3: Officers shall preside for the term of one year, except the Master’s Student Advocate. The Master’s Student Advocate shall preside for the term of one semester. Elections for this office will be held at the beginning of each semester.

Section 13: Acting as a liaison between the GSC and the master’s programs, the Master’s Student Advocate shall outreach to the community of master’s students and offer the perspective of master’s students to the GSC board.

Article VII: External Committees
Section 4:
- Current: The term of service on external committees shall be determined by that committee's charge or at the preference of the representative.
- Amendment: Representatives to external committees are elected for 1-year terms. After 1 year, the positions as representatives to external committees are open for general election at the next GSC meeting. Veteran representatives may run for reelection.

Section 7 (Addition): Representatives who fail to report to the GSC are considered delinquent and forfeit their positions as representatives to their respective external committees. A representative is “delinquent” if he or she does not respond to an email from the GSC Vice President regarding their respective committees within one month. Once a representative is deemed “delinquent,” his or her position as representative is open for general election at the next GSC meeting.

By-Laws:
Article XXV: Conference Funding
Section 1: In light of the prohibitive cost of conferences, individuals who are ineligible for financial support from the Graduate School of Brown University may request conference funding from the GSC.

Section 2: Requests for funding must be made 1 week prior to a GSC meeting to be considered at that meeting. The grant request shall include:

1. Amount of money requested
2. Description of conference and how your participation advances your education at Brown
3. A complete budget
Section 3: The individual requesting money from the GSC must be a currently enrolled graduate student and make a brief presentation at a meeting of the GSC regarding their request.

Section 4: Voting on a funding request shall take place at the GSC meeting at which the initial proposal was heard. The individual making the request shall be present at that meeting to answer questions before voting takes place.

Section 6: If the funding request is denied, the individual may not repetition the GSC until the next school year.

Section 7: If the funding request is approved, the individual shall submit a “Travel Expense Report” to the GSC treasurer with appropriate documentation for expenses for reimbursement.

Section 8: Individuals may make one funding request per school year for up to $200.

Section 9: Money for conference funding shall come from the approved budget for “Group and Event Funding.”

Section 10: Money allocated for conference funding shall be distributed proportionally among students in the humanities, social sciences, life sciences, and physical sciences. These amounts shall be based upon the percentage of graduate students enrolled in each area, according to records kept by the Graduate School.