

GSO Executive Committee Meeting Minutes: October 4, 2019

Prepared by Erin Conley

In attendance: Adryanna Smith, Baran Bodur, Collin Malone, Ryan Kozlowski, Jay Runge, Utsav Patel, Elise le Boulicaut, Charlie Prior, Erin Conley (remote)

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

- Utsav and Baran: improving open house
 - Focus on grad student interactions (more time with faculty)
 - Can GSO organize reimbursable organized outings off campus? Alcohol issues?
 - List of information sites to adjust to life in Durham; housing options
 - Ask Katherine for follow-up
 - Cater more to international students? Is there a person dedicated to working with international students?
 - Better advertisement of the limit on airfare (but not actually a limit)?
 - Block in open house timetable to talk casually – cookie time? (Specifically ask Katherine about leaving time open and available for all the prospective students?)
 - Revamp meetings with faculty?
 - Next steps: Utsav will make a survey to gather data
 - Specifically for first/second years
 - Need to know who actually attended open house
 - For the people who couldn't come: video chat/alternative way to talk to Duke students/faculty?
 - Faculty needs to update their bios (ask Steffen to ask the faculty?)
 - Utsav, Baran, Charlie will take point on this work
 - They will send a follow-up email to GSO EC
- Erin presented budget submitted to Katherine and approved by the department
 - Jay will handle the textbooks
 - Pizza party for the GSO survey's winning class was under budget (\$120 instead of \$200)
 - Follow up with first-year students about the cookie time budget to best utilize the funding and cookies
 - Follow-up on more accurate costs of events, food, etc.
- Follow-up from August 21 meeting:
 - Science Under the Stars: a couple GSO EC members have volunteered already! But no one else...continue to advertise for volunteers!
 - Questions for Baran and Tyler:
 - Grad school Q&A session went well, although we can improve the session in the future:
 - Host additional session in March/before students apply for grad schools in the fall

- Dedicated time block for the session
 - No updates on joint events with Duke SPS; Baran and Ryan (maybe Tyler) will follow up on this
 - Too late to organize GRE prep sessions
- Charlie will be the fridge monitor in grad lounge!
- Party monitoring update: several people completed the training, although GSO might not have to worry about this...
- Committee chairs:
 - News/web: Adryanna
 - Computing: no
- Results of graduate student survey: no statistics or results
 - Ryan (Jon?) to send out raw data to GSO EC
 - Lots of positive feedback
 - GSO EC will attempt to pull other surveys together
- Adryanna: Industry panel update
 - Approved! Duke physics alumni in industry positions to come back to Duke and talk with students about industry jobs
 - How do we go about finding people (2-3 for the panel)?
 - GSO was approved for enough money to fund two people to travel to Duke and speak locally – we could also utilize Zoom/Skype/ BlueJeans and have remote panelists
 - Local people/people the GSO EC know? Duke Alumni Network?
 - Ask faculty to list past students from their group
 - Adryanna will send an email to faculty to acquire names of people who are 2-10 years out of academia
 - Also need a date/time (sometime in the spring), food
- Jay: redo Thanksgiving event that was hosted last year
 - GSO has access to everything (corn holes, equipment from campout, etc.) except for the food
 - Need to figure out a date (probably not on Thanksgiving); take into account students' schedules
 - Include in the newsletter!
- Adryanna will work on a joint November/December newsletter
 - Contact Adryanna for events/items that the newsletter should include!
- Committee feedback:
 - GSS has not been utilized yet; Ryan will be in touch with Katherine
 - Flyers were dispensed in the department
 - Ryan and Katherine are discussing costs; Ryan will keep the GSO up to date about the discussions
 - GPSC: Emily has stepped away

- Is it okay to only have Tyler on GPSC?
- Adryanna presented outreach updates:
 - Formed separate club to potentially gain access to additional funding
 - We can include people outside physics and undergrads
 - Need drivers for rental cars; contact Derek to get set up
 - GSO EC will follow up with Adryanna/Derek on outreach opportunities:
 - End of October: outreach opportunity at elementary school
 - Spring break: travel to several schools in underserved areas
 - Need another person to help with this!
 - Not enough volunteers to visit schools regularly; class reps should email their class with this info!
 - Maybe recruit other STEM grad students in these opportunities?
 - Divinity school hosts ice cream social on Tuesdays, partners with different departments and grad students
 - October 15 with physics
 - Put this event into newsletter
- Women in physics dinner:
 - Talk to SPS about doing a joint event?
 - Erin offered her house for the event
- Mentorship program: follow up with mentors in about a month from now
- Revamping Tea Time/reading club:
 - Tea Time used to be an event separate from Cookie Time in which grad students gathered to drink tea/coffee
 - Perhaps we can revamp Tea Time and turn it into a reading club;
 - Read physics papers; scan through arXiv headlines and read interesting abstracts
 - Maybe have it once every other week (twice a month)?
 - Tin foil hat club/class taught by Phil could be considered a reading club already, although it's neutrino physics-heavy
 - Make the reading club more general (subjects every physicist should know if different fields)
 - Class reps could contact their classes to see if people are interested; or Erin could contact grad students to see if people are interested
- Physics circles:
 - This semester, Sarah Brandsen and Erin Conley are co-teaching a weekly, hour-long math seminar to students at the North Carolina School of Science and Math called "Math Circles"
 - Next semester, could host "Physics Circles" in which grad students can talk about their own research for at least 30 minutes (up to 1 hour)

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- One time commitment, although it's possible for students to present more than once if they are interested
 - Depends on interest/volunteers to give talks
 - Concerns about recruiting people...Erin/class reps can send emails to grad students, but might not receive a response
 - Explain in person for increased success rate
 - Class reps to think of people who might be interested; reach out to them or provide Erin with that list
- Next GSO EC meeting:
 - Week of October 20, or last week of October