

UD Graduate Student Government
March Public Meeting Minutes

February 09, 2017 | 104 Gore Hall | 6:00 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 6:04pm.

II. GUEST SPEAKER – ANN ARDIS (OGPE)

- Dr. Ardis presented on the potential formation of the Graduate College. President Assanis is excited to push this initiation to align with the Delaware Will Shine strategic planning.
- There has been a Hanover Research Report commissioned for graduate studies that the white paper is based off of, with 39 peer institutions included as part of the review.
- There has been a push from the Provost to increase graduate intellectual “density”, the ratio of graduate students to undergraduate students. Our current enrollment is around 17-20% graduate, compared to 60% for institutions such as University of Chicago.
- Please provide feedback to the working group, since there has not been any chance to hear from graduate students yet. Graduate body participation is crucial. You can do so here: <http://grad.udel.edu/graduate-working-group-comment/>. There will also be Townhalls planned in the future.
- There has been strong support from the College level, since there will be a greater capacity in support of interdisciplinary programs if a Graduate College is formed.
- UD lacks the branding that carries through different departments that explains what the graduate experience at UD means. What supports do graduate students, who are by nature more diverse (family status, tenure time, needs, etc.) than undergraduates, need for a better student life? For example, UD does not provide housing to graduate students which is a huge problem for international students, especially if they have families.
- The white paper discusses the functions that the Grad College would have. Under the current budget model, interdisciplinary research /programs are not well-supported, and this infrastructure will promote this more. By streamlining management, resources can be better allocated.
- Targeted hires for Graduate Faculty?
 - This was controversial in the working group. There are consultants coming in to aid the group in answering those set of questions, pertaining to structure, function, and funding.
- Graduate Council?
 - The first institution for Graduate program was a Graduate Studies, which then became Graduate School with a Graduate Council. The establishment of the Council is also under discussion with the working group.
- The white paper seems very much from the perspective of administrators. How will the formation of Grad College affect graduate students?

- This highlights the importance of graduate student feedback. There is currently no budget for staff that help with recruitment of diverse populations, which would be better planned with unified college systems. There is also no unified career services for graduate students across programs. Issues of this nature would be better aided.
- Follow up: Why has there not been graduate student representation in the working group?
 - Until now this was a more private discussion with the working group, but since this is going public now, there are many opportunities for graduate students to provide feedback.
- Comment: The white paper is promoting Grad College to better the lives of graduate students, but we oftentimes witness that our initiatives do not turn into actions due to administrative barriers. For example, despite faculty advocacy in some labs, grad tuition is an issue, the Speakeasy is closed without any notice nor response to resolutions from GSG, so if grad life is not great as of now, how would setting up another infrastructure improve our lives?
 - Student experience is being researched by a center in Berkeley, which UD is participating in. Dr. Martin has also collected a library of data during graduate exit interviews. Combined, granted we have enough participation, should give us enough data about graduate student life at UD. Speakeasy was mentioned in student life functionality in the working group, please communicate with us.
 - We wrote a resolution in GSG about the importance of having a graduate space such as the Speakeasy but there has not been any action from the university. Before the Grad College is formed, how should we communicate the resolutions that come out from GSG?
 - Please use the comments function in the white paper to bring these issues to awareness.

III. A. INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Communications Committee – Cara Tortorice (carat@udel.edu)

- No updates at this time.

Events Committee – Caitlin Hutchinson (chutch@udel.edu)

- Deadline for abstracts has been extended to Friday. Please reach out to your constituents to personally invite them to present.
- There will be more push to invite more people to attend the forum, even if they are not presenting. Please encourage your department members to attend.
- We are also in need of moderators, please volunteer if you can.

Social Committee – Ty Nie (htnie@udel.edu)

- Graduate Student Night at the REP is tomorrow! Reception will be held at Claymont Steakhouse.

III.B. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Diversity Committee – Justin Coger (jcoger@udel.edu) & Nathan Thayer (nthayer@udel.edu)

- There has been space secured for the white elephant RePRESENT yourself, to be held on April 11th.

Student Life Committee – Eddie Marks (edmarks@udel.edu)

- No updates at this time.

Sustainability Committee – Curt Davis (cjdavis@udel.edu)

- We have officially adopted a park and will be planning our first clean-up event.
- A working group has formed to work on the reusable water bottle program suggested last meeting. A proposal will be drafted and presented soon.
- There has been a response from EHS concerning the battery recycling program. At this time EHS does not have the capacity to implement this program, and suggests hiring an external company, but EHS has asked other institutions how they handle battery recycling. If you would like to reverse this verdict, please contact us.

III.C. SENATE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Governance Committee – Matthew Rinkevich (mrink@udel.edu)

- Please refer to Senate floor.

Elections Committee – Carrie Glenn (carriele@udel.edu)

- Special Elections Meeting will be next Thursday at 6pm, room TBD. Please talk to your nominees after the meeting if you would like.

III.D. EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Faculty Senate Graduate Studies Committee – Stijn Kosharis (kosharis@udel.edu) & Carrie Glenn (carriele@udel.edu)

- Please see committee reports to see the changes made to graduate programs.
- There also has been a discussion on renewable energy use at UD. The resolution was not passed.

III.E. ORGANIZATIONAL DELEGATE REPORTS

Interdisciplinary Graduate Forum

- There has been a new organization called Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Forum, to promote exchange of ideas across disciplines. First event will be held March 10th with a talk

on Interdisciplinary Research, 116 Pearson Hall, 11am-12pm, lunch provided. Please RSVP by 10pm March 9th, to igfudel@gmail.com.

- Please help spread this information to your constituents.

IV. OPEN FLOOR

- A. Officer bios for nominees have been distributed and uploaded on the website.
- B. Senator Nominations will open soon as well.
- C. GSG has drafted resolution SR-1617-05 advocating peer-led mental health support groups.
 - a. EmPOWER: Empathetic Peers Offering Wisdom, Encouragement, and Resources.
 - b. Chemical Engineering has implemented a trial program where trained graduate students would be trained to talk to peers about mental health.
 - c. There has been need for recognition and treatment for mental health. At UC Berkeley, 47% PhD and 37% Masters students were clinically depressed after a survey. There has also been suicides at Harvard. 66% of UD Chem Engineering students wanted improvement in mental health. EmPOWER has been adopted from MIT.
 - d. Students would be trained to be confidential, low-barrier mental health support. Faculty mentors and administrative mentors would also be included to serve as a mediator between students and faculty. This would be a 2-year commitment as of now.
 - e. A program is being developed with UD Counseling center, a 20h program (active listening, de-escalation, confidentiality and ethics code, impartiality, laying out solutions, specific language, rules of the Department and University).
 - f. EmPOWER hopes to become the pilot program that would eventually expand to all graduate students.
 - g. If a department does not support this, could EmPOWER adopt students from other departments?
 - i. Going forward we will be trying to build a more interdisciplinary, universal program.
 - ii. Sometimes this is beneficial because a student may *not* want to talk to a mentor within their own department or the department is too small to support the program.
 - h. At a certain point, the peer mentors will have to pass concerns further, whether to faculty, admin, or counseling center. They will serve as facilitators of conversation.
 - i. What happens after the resolution is passed? Because this program is a departmental effort at this time, how does it benefit by having GSG, a unified graduate body, endorse this action?
 - i. The creation of an Ad-hoc committee would be beneficial.

V. SENATE FLOOR

Parliamentarian Rinkevich opened the Senate Floor at 7:47 p.m.

- A. Old Business

- It was moved and seconded to approve the Minutes from February 09th, 2017. There was no discussion and the Minutes were approved.
- B. New Business
 - SR-1617-05
 - The Senate unanimously approved to accept the revisions, to suggest the formation of an Ad-hoc committee.
 - The Senate unanimously approved to accept the revised resolution.
 - No legislation from the floor.

Senate Floor closed at 7:49pm.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- UD has released a draft for white paper for the establishment of UD Graduate School / College on UDaily: <https://www.udel.edu/udaily/2017/february/graduate-school-draft-for-review/>. Please review and send comments. It is highly important to voice our thoughts since this is the first opportunity for graduate student input.
- There is a deadline extension for abstract submission for the 7th Annual Graduate Forum. Please submit your abstracts by March 10th.
- For all upcoming committee meeting times and locations and GSG events, please see <http://sites.udel.edu/gsg/>.
- Announcements from the floor.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyra H. Kim
Graduate Student Government Secretary