

General Council Meeting Agenda: November 23, 2023

# General Council Meeting

1. Call to Order and sign in!

# Executive Board Reports

* 1. President Lacey Rzodkiewicz ([ldr27@pitt.edu](mailto:ldr27@pitt.edu)):
     1. Saving my gabbing for GPSG report and new business
     2. GOSECA call for submissions for their conference-Due this Friday (see flyer below)
        1. Policy, literature, film – anything related to eastern Europe in these fields is of interest to this organization
        2. Conference at the end of February
     3. International Culture Night! Also this Friday! 7-9 (see flyer below)
        1. Put on by GISPA
        2. Event for undergrads and grads
        3. Various performances and foods available
     4. Successful international student townhall
        1. Approached by students from sociology
        2. International students discussed their experiences with American healthcare
        3. About 15-20 people in attendance
        4. Two issues raised:
           1. Does receiving a 1040-MISC violate VISA conditions? From my research, no. It is not considered “income” though it is taxable and therefore is fine to receive as an international student
           2. No health insurance coverage until a month after arrival

SCI rep stated that OIS recommends paying for traveler's insurance to cover the interim-apparently, this is quite cost effective to purchase in most countries!

# Vice President Payne Bannister ([wpb20@pitt.edu](mailto:wpb20@pitt.edu)):

* 1. Faculty Advisor Rosemary Capo ([rcapo@pitt.edu](mailto:rcapo@pitt.edu)):
     1. Continuing to follow up with provost office on health insurance
     2. Keep updating website with info on emergency funds and health insurance
     3. Dean Woon and Rosemary are going to meet next week with student taskforce to see how things are going
     4. All schools at Pitt are adapting to 8-month appointments in all the letters – any questions sent to Rosemary were forwarded to the grad office – can't hold 2 Pitt appointments, but there’s nothing preventing students from working outside
     5. Interviews have been going on with counselor who’s working specifically with Dietrich grad students – stay tuned for that, should be coming soon
     6. Working with GSO on 3-min thesis and grad expo, reserving rooms and coming up with dates
     7. Office of Provost said there will be a Spring orientation 2/6/2024
     8. University center for teaching and learning has a website / page now with resources for teaching during times of conflict – now available
     9. Pitt Concerns – go there to anonymously report any harassment or issues on campus
     10. Dietrich School Grad Council working on revising academic policy to include generative AI

# Administrative Assistant Christina Vega-Alemany ([asgso@pitt.edu](mailto:asgso@pitt.edu)):

# Don’t forget to submit the purchase approval form prior to purchasing things to make sure you’re good!

# Please check our website or with myself/Lacey/Payne for deadlines for grants and/or reimbursements and also make sure to check your email for any information from us!

# Internal Committees

# GPSG:

* + 1. Representatives: Lacey, Payne, Arnab
    2. All grads should now have access to fifth floor grad lounge in WPU by ID card now! If you have an issue, the front desk at WPU is to take a pic of your ID and send it to Panther Central to program/pinpoint what student codes are still missing
    3. Pitched a food drive for Pitt Pantry in January; school competition to earn funding for school level GSO
       1. Lacey editorial remark: I am personally not super comfortable with this as a competition-It implies that having extra to give should be given a reward while schools with high pops of international grads and other vulnerable groups will have lower participation and therefore not deserving of supplement?
    4. Watch their event brite for holiday events! Ugly Sweater party coming up!
    5. Complete the grad life survey: <https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_42SewIvi9W7a54G>
    6. Brought up how other school organizations are approaching unionization
       1. GPSG used a standard phrase about “not endorsing specific political activity” around 2019 elections and will be doing the same to communicate updates going forward
       2. GSPIA and SCI may be interested in signing a statement of support
       3. Historical Precedent:
          1. In 2019, CGS released a statement supporting grad unionization
          2. In 2021(? Lacey is 90% sure on the year), GPSG wrote a statement of support asking for good faith elections and bargaining for faculty

A&S GSO abstained from signing-out method is to always sign as the board on statements we write, and ask each dept rep to determine student support within their dept, report their voter turnout, and add their dept as a signatory (preferably with percentage supportive)

**Lacey proposed releasing another statement this year as ASGSO in support of good faith elections and good faith bargaining and allowing these campaigns to continue on-campus – majority in the meeting tonight voted yes to doing this**

# Grad Expo:

* + 1. Chair: Payne Banister
    2. We have rooms reserved
    3. The date is now March 28th (Thursday)
    4. Grad Expo in the afternoon (12-5p)
    5. Exit survey going to be sent out to participants from last year to plan for this year and future years
    6. Plan to send out call for papers for anyone wanting to present – Jan 8th right when we come back and will send follow-up emails, applications will be closed on February 9th. February 23rd, participants will be notified and will be able to plan. Everyone will be notified if they are participating by March 1st
    7. Feb 12th judges search will begin, Feb 21st judges search will end.
    8. March 18th, flyers and ads will be posted about Grad Expo
    9. Goal is to make it big :)

# Teaching Awards:

* + 1. Members: Natalie Runkle (nataliebrunkle@gmail.com) (Philosophy), Alysha Lieurance (Anthropology), Caitlin Mace ([cbm49@pitt.edu](mailto:cbm49@pitt.edu)), Kathryn Carney (klc171@pitt.edu)
    2. Had a luncheon with award winners
    3. Thinking ahead to next year: hoping to get 2 volunteers to shadow for the next year and take on the committee for the following year.
    4. In the spring they will collect nominations and work on awarding students

# Committee for Diversity and Inclusion:

* + 1. Members: Mihir Khanna (Physics), Arnab Dey Sakar (Math)
    2. Advocating for regular/informal socials for international students in our schools to get to know each other
    3. Trying to do some events with international undergraduates and graduates to talk about experiences and bond
  1. Summer Research Grants
     1. Chair:

# External A&S Committees:

# Healthcare task force: Allison Mahoney ([amm540@pitt.edu](mailto:amm540@pitt.edu))

# Is sending Lacey their updates tonight! Maybe I (Lacey) have them by 6! Maybe!

* 1. A&S Dietrich Council: DSAS Council, grad student reps
     1. Reps: Grace Naa Korkoi Amoah ([GNA16@pitt.edu),](mailto:GNA16@pitt.edu) Godspower Ubit ([godspowerubit@pitt.edu)](mailto:godspowerubit@pitt.edu)

# A&S PBC: DSAS Planning & Budgeting Committee, grad student reps

* + 1. Reps: Neel Patel ([NEP48@pitt.edu](mailto:NEP48@pitt.edu)), Edison Hauptman ([ERH129@pitt.edu)](mailto:ERH129@pitt.edu), Christina Vega-Alemañy ([CMV66@pitt.edu](mailto:CMV66@pitt.edu))
    2. Information from Edison: We met on 11/7 (Election Day), so the state senate was out of session. I suspect the meeting had been put off because the senate had not yet passed our university funding bill for the year. Pittwire's update for today confirms that the senate has passed a bill: <https://www.pitt.edu/pittwire/features-articles/pennsylvania-lawmakers-approve-funding-in-state-tuition-2023>. In the 11/7 PBC meeting, there was some worry about the senate forcing a tuition freeze on Pitt for AY 24-25. I have just (today, 11/16) confirmed in Dean Adam Leibovich's Office Hours that the budget passed leaves the university $11m short of what was anticipated/passed by the university in July 2023, but that there will be no tuition freeze imposed. Which is to say, tuition *may* go up. The DSAS PBC will reconvene in January—since we didn't have a budget, absolutely nothing concrete was accomplished in the 11/7 meeting. Just some information-sharing.
    3. Information from Christina: How the budget works
       1. Old model: Not based on anything, you basically have a set budget that you’ve had for years and every year you can ask for a small increase and they might approve
       2. New budget: You get money based on how much revenue your school is developing
       3. Vision going forward: all the revenue produced flows to individual schools and pays for school necessities

# A&S Grad Council:

* + 1. Reps: Oluwasegun Amoniyan ([OMA55@pitt.edu)](mailto:OMA55@pitt.edu), Turki Alturaifi ([tma53@pitt.edu](mailto:tma53@pitt.edu)), Laura Beghini Chelidonopoulos ([laura.chelidonopoulos@pitt.edu](mailto:laura.chelidonopoulos@pitt.edu)), Si Wang ([SIW34@pitt.edu)](mailto:SIW34@pitt.edu), Akira Pinto ([akira.pinto@pitt.edu](mailto:akira.pinto@pitt.edu))

# University Council on Graduate Studies

* + 1. Rep: Robert Marshall ([rrm72@pitt.edu](mailto:rrm72@pitt.edu))

# Old or Unfinished Business:

1. New Business:
   1. Emergency funds-how to distribute as a grant?
      1. PLEASE HELP ME

# Announcements:

* + 1. <https://discord.gg/T6kWFFQ8tJ>
    2. If you’re still not a member of the Discord server, now is a good time to join!

