

General Council Meeting Agenda: October 17, 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. Eight vs Twelve month stipend change:
        1. Spoke with Vice Provost Godley today at 1h45
        2. With 12 months, students paid FICA tax over the summer (less $ than if taken over 8 month)
        3. System prevention of students from holding two appointments:
           1. 12 months “looks like” an appointment year round in Pitt’s system-no way to pay without a labeled appointment
           2. Cannot have a summer appointment or hourly through the University
           3. NOTE: No appointment letter for GSA, GSR, TA, or TF can prevent external employment per revised guidelines in 2022; if your appointment letter forbids external employment, send it to Lacey!

Can also email our advisor Dr. Rosemary Capo about the 8 or 12-month stipend issue or any other appointment letter issues

NOTE: Students will not get an updated appointment letter that shows actual amount you make after tax is taken off – contact Dr. Rosemary Capo about this if you need a more specific letter for tax or employment purposes, etc.

NOTE: For Summer appointments, the school has created a “course” that you can enroll in to have a Summer appointment and have it show that you are enrolled without actually needing to take a class – SMS course (so students can avoid that FICA tax) - all you have to pay is $12 student activity fee

* + 1. Purchase Approval form now exists!
       1. Purchase approval form should be submitted at least one week in advance of purchase - This should be on the ASGSO website. If you cannot find it, email Christina or Lacey, and we can provide that for you.
       2. Christina will provide you with a confirmation
       3. HIGHLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE SORC PURCHASING HOURS!!!
    2. BUDGET! I will talk about this after other reports as it will be the heftiest part of the meeting
       1. If you had a representative attend any meeting during the last year, then you are considered in good standing – doesn't mean you shouldn’t come to every meeting, but still!
       2. If you know that your department has a sub program under it and it hasn’t been counted in the good standing sheet or in any sheet, let Lacey or Christina know!
       3. $1000 taken from social events and moved to grad expo
       4. Christina has to email SORC about the phone line we keep getting charged for that we do not use 😀
       5. Rosemary is going to check about how the GA is paid in the Summer – does it come out of the grad office or the ASGSO budget?!

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

* 1. Faculty Advisor Rosemary Capo ([rcapo@pitt.edu](mailto:rcapo@pitt.edu)):
     1. Pitt website will continue to be updated with information on the medical assistance fund – Vice Provost Godly is updating
     2. Dean Moon is having another Center for Creativity event in Hillman – great way to take a break from work! On November 10th
     3. Generative AI issue on campus – Dean Woon is looking for input and thoughts on this – programs may have to consider the usage of this – so far it seems like a positive tool to use, but TA’s might have to revise syllabi to reflect classroom policy with regard to AI usage on assignments
        1. Academic Integrity policy may need to be changed

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

# She will send out an expenses Excel sheet of all expenses made this semester so far along with an updated fy23-24 budget Excel sheet to reflect some updated budgets for some departments

# Internal Committees

# GPSG:

* + 1. Representatives: Lacey, Payne, Arnab
    2. Fall events upcoming: <https://www.pittgpsg.com/events-calendar>
       1. Monday the 23rd: Yoga for healthy minds at noon
       2. Friday the 27th: Halloween party at Tom’s Watch bar
    3. Discussion on healthcare: clear issue across university; succesfully advocated for additional representation - some new students on the healthcare taskforce added from different departments

# Grad Expo:

* + 1. Chair: Payne Banister
    2. Hoping to continue partnering with the graduate office
    3. Considering moving grad expo to the afternoon to attract more graduate students
    4. More marketing – creating flyers and targeting departments with larger student involvement
    5. Curious about splitting awards into 6 $200 awards – money amount is up in the air right now – maybe first place will get $300, second place gets $200, etc.
    6. Possibility of food to attract judges, audience members, etc. Need to look at budget to see if that is a possibility
    7. Want to draft a survey for previously involved graduate students to see what worked for them in the expo and what didnt’
    8. Committee is going to meet next month
    9. NOTE: Email Payne to learn more about grad expo!!!!!
    10. Lacey suggested targeting and inviting post-docs

# Teaching Awards:

* + 1. Members: Natalie Runkle (Philosophy), Alysha Lieurance (Anthropology)
    2. There will be an awards dinner with both nominees and some in the grad admin office
    3. Nomination forms should be sent out at the end of November
    4. We award TA’s year-round
    5. Award cycle is every year, not term
    6. Awards given out

# Committee for Diversity and Inclusion:

* + 1. Members: Mihir Khanna (Physics), Arnab Dey Sakar (Math)
    2. Talked about outreach event for students to let them know that the committee exists – have food and allow people to voice their worries
    3. No clear direction right now because no one has voiced anything to them
    4. Want to get a survey from previous years to see what thoughts on the committee were
  1. Summer Research Grants
     1. Chair:

# External A&S Committees:

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

# Will proceed as one plan for undergrad and grad students

# All plans must be determined by February (approval from State House as we receive public funding) - feedback provided now is more valuable than early next semester

# University is spending similar amounts on current plan compared to past

# UPMC would have raised price on former by ~7.5%

# Hardship assistance fund

# If you receive more than $600 total (not at once) cumulatively over the calendar year, Pitt must report that as income – it is taxable income at the end of the year – this language is not in the application, so let your students in your department know

* 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))

# 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))
    2. Had a presentation / talk about ChatGPT
    3. Talked about Math TA reviews and went through responses
    4. Talked about using gender neutral words

# 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. Want to make into an “award” Adjudication process?
      2. Anyone interested in chairing?
      3. Lacey is going to bring it up at the GPSG meeting this Thursday – she'll send an email out after that meeting with updates

# 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!