GSAC

SEMESTER REPORT

SPRING 2016

GSAC is committed to improving the quality of life for Columbia graduate students by: (1) Serving as a communication link between the graduate student population and the Columbia administration and advocating on behalf of graduate students when necessary; (2) organizing social and cultural events for graduate students; (3) providing funding for student-led academic and cultural initiatives.

2015-2016 STEERING COMMITTEE:

President: Whitney Cowell, PhD Candidate in Environmental Health Sciences
Vice President of Admin: Helen Janiszewski, PhD Candidate in Earth & Environ Sciences
Vice President of Communications: Celia Eddy, PhD Candidate in Earth & Environ Sciences
Budget & Finance: Carolina Ferrerose-Young, PhD Candidate in Political Sciences
Quality of Life: Philip Rodenbough, PhD Candidate in Chemistry
Alumni & Career Development: Yuxi Lin, PhD Candidate in Nutrition & Metabolic Biology
Culture: Billur Avlar, PhD Candidate in Psychology
Social: Sarah Joseph, PhD Candidate in Genetics & Development
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DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATION

VOTING SEATS: 60 (39 GSAS; 21 NON-GSAS)
  • Filled: 36
  • Vacant: 24

ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING & PRESERVATION (0/2)
  • Unrepresented: Architecture, Urban planning

ARTS & SCIENCES: BIOMEDICAL* (8/10)
  • Unrepresented: Biomedical Informatics; Genetics & Development; Microbiology, Immunology & Infection; Neurobiology & Behavior; Pathobiology & Molecular Medicine

ARTS & SCIENCES: HUMANITIES (10/13)
  • Unrepresented: Art History & Archaeology, Classical Studies, Classics

ARTS & SCIENCES: NATURAL SCIENCES (7/9)
  • Unrepresented: Astronomy, Mathematics

ARTS & SCIENCES: SOCIAL SCIENCES (4/5)
  • Unrepresented: Sociology

BUSINESS (0/1)
  • Unrepresented: Business

ENGINEERING* (1/10)
  • Unrepresented: Applied Physics & Applied Mathematics, Biomedical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering & Engineering Mechanics, Computer Science, Earth & Environmental Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering

INTERNATIONAL & PUBLIC AFFAIRS (1/1)

JOURNALISM (1/1)

PUBLIC HEALTH (2/4)
  • Unrepresented: Biostatistics, Epidemiology

NURSING (1/1)

SOCIAL WORK (1/1)

MA PROGRAMS (1/1)

*The GSAS Biomedical programs and the Engineering programs are represented by GSO and EGSC, respectively. A student in any of their departments can fill any their votes (as opposed to one per department).
ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

ELECTIONS

2016-2017 STEERING COMMITTEE

President: Sarah Joseph, PhD Candidate in Genetics & Development
Vice President of Administration: Lisa Kahl, PhD Candidate in Biology
Vice President of Comm: Ian Bradley-Perrin, PhD Candidate in Sociomedical Sciences
Alumni & Career Development Chair: Tauriq Jenkins, MA Student in Oral History
Budget & Finance Chair: Sarah Arkebauer, PhD Candidate in English & Comp Lit
Culture Chair: David Mejia, PhD Candidate in Latin American & Iberian Cultures
Quality of Life Chair: Sandra Chiritescu, PhD Candidate in Germanic Languages
Social Chair: Frank Cusimano, PhD Candidate in Nutritional & Metabolic Biology

SENATE

GSAC is currently accepting nominations for the the GSAS student senate Social Sciences and Pure Sciences positions. We plan to conduct the elections using an online polling platform.

EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES

In addition to the GSAC external representatives that were appointed during the Fall 2015 semester (Student Health CUMC, Student Health Morningside, Libraries, Graduate Workers of Columbia, Interschool), we have additionally appointed two students to serve as liaisons between GSAC and ISSO. This year we have also appointed two GSAS Festifall 2016 Co-Chairs and a GSAS representative to the newly established graduate Interschool Governing Board (IGB).

MEETINGS

During the Spring 2016 semester the GSAC steering committee met on a monthly basis. We additionally met with the GSAS Dean’s office on a monthly basis and with the Provost’s office once during the semester. We held monthly plenary meetings with our department representatives. At these meetings we invited a different office or student service at the University to join us for a question and answer session.

• January 2016: GSAS Dean’s Office
• February 2016: Graduate Workers of Columbia
• March 2016: University Housing
• April 2016: Center for Teaching & Learning

This year the Steering Committee is hosting a free end of the year event with food and drinks after our final plenary meeting to say thank you to our outgoing department representatives and welcome to our incoming representatives.
AWARDS

FACULTY MENTORING AWARDS
GSAC presents a faculty mentoring award annually to two members of Columbia University faculty to recognize excellence in mentoring PhD students during their graduate careers. Nominations are reviewed by a committee of graduate students from diverse departments. The recipients of the 2016 awards are Professor Christopher Brown (History) and Professor Rosalind Morris (Anthropology).

SERVICE AWARDS
Each year GSAC presents three Service Awards to a combination of graduate students (Masters or PhD) and/or administrators in recognition of service to the Columbia graduate community. The recipients of the 2016 Service Awards are: Ann Madigan (GSAS Director of Administrative Operations), David Austell (Director of ISSO), and Andrea Crow (PhD Candidate in English and Comparative Literature).

STUDENT GROUP APPROVAL
THE 92% ALLIANCE (January)
The purpose of the 92% Alliance is to provide graduate students working at Columbia University Medical Center (CUMC) with increased support and resources for learning about and preparing for non-tenure-track careers. The group planning and coordinating events specific to different types of careers (Entrepreneurship; Industry; and Science Writing, Policy and Outreach).

UNIVERSITIES ALLIED FOR ESSENTIAL MEDICINES (January)
The purpose of UAEM at Columbia is to create an interdisciplinary network of students and faculty to work toward various global health issues.

COLUMBIA OPEN LABS (February)
The Columbia Open Labs Fellowship consists of graduate and professional students who are devoted to encouraging and supporting promising young scholars to pursue careers in the sciences. The fellows are dedicated to making their cutting edge research fields accessible to the young students at this pivotal stage, where the kids set out to carve their future college education, career, and scientific journey.
BUDGET & FINANCE

OPERATING BUDGET

The 2015-2016 GSAC operating budget was approximately $98,000 ($27,000 carry-over and $71,000 in new funds allocated from GSAS). In summary, these funds were spent on: social and culture events ($37,000), SIGs ($20,000), steering committee stipends ($12,000), travel grants ($10,000), meetings and promotion ($5,000), career development events ($4,000), NAGPS and Ivy+ involvement ($4,000), and award conferral ($1,500). Detailed expenses are provided online.

STUDENT INITIATIVE GRANTS (SIGS)

Each semester GSAC awards funding to recognized student groups in the form of SIGs. These grants provide support for events that bring together students, academically or socially, from various departments. Types of events supported by SIG funding include: academic conferences, discussion groups, and community service initiatives.

APPLICATIONS

Number of grants submitted: 19
Total funding requested: $15,140
Maximum funding requested by one group: $1000
Minimum funding requested by one group: $400
Median funding requested: $920 (Mean: $757)

AWARDS

Number of grants awarded: 19 (100% of applications)
Total funding awarded: $11,555 (76.3% of total funds requested)
Maximum funding awarded to one group: $890
Minimum funding awarded to one group: $400
Median funding awarded $450 (Mean: $608)

TRAVEL GRANTS

Each semester GSAC awards graduate students with travel grants (up to $500) to defray the costs associated with presenting their work at academic and professional conferences and workshops. The numbers below reflect 1 of the 3 funding cycles for 2015-2016.

APPLICATIONS

Number of grants submitted: 18
• Humanities: 2; Social Sciences: 5; Natural Sciences: 9; Biomedical Sciences: 2; Professional School PhDs: 0
Average funding requested: $490
Total funding requested: $8338

AWARDS

Applications currently under review by the finance committee.
Total funding available to be awarded: $4021 (48.2% of requested)
QUALITY OF LIFE

QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

During the Spring 2016 Semester, the Quality of Life Committee designed, administered, and analyzed the 2016 Quality of Life Survey. The full report is forthcoming and will be available on our website.

UNIVERISTY HOUSING

The Quality of Life Committee also facilitated a meeting with Facilities and Housing at the March 2016 GSAC plenary meeting. This gave department representatives and other interested graduate students the opportunity to air grievances and better understand the housing system and process. In follow-up meetings between the QoL chair and the director of leasing at UAH, it was agreed that a regular meeting once per semester (between the QoL chair and housing admin) will be established to maintain communication between the graduate student community and UAH housing administration. This will be enacted regularly for the 2016-2017 and beyond.

NAGPS

The Quality of Life Chair attended the 2016 National Association of Graduate and Professional Students Northeast Regional Conference, April 15-17. There he was able to network with leaders from other schools, compare notes on best practices, and further encourage the advocacy work that NAGPS does on a national level. Incoming Quality of Life Chair Sandra Chiritescu also attended the conference. At the conference, Sandra was elected to the NAGPS NE Regional Chair on International Student Concerns for the 2016-2017 academic year. Columbia also won a bid to host the 2017 NAGPS NE Regional Conference, for which Sandra will be the Director.

ALUMNI & CAREER DEVELOPMENT

LINKEDIN WORKSHOP

GSAC will be co-hosting a LinkedIn workshop with CCE focused on profile development and improvement, strategies for network expansion, and tips for getting noticed by recruiters. A photographer will also be present to take professional photographs that can be used on LinkedIn and other professional networking profiles.

CAREER WORKSHOP

GSAC will be hosting a career workshop in May. Details to be provided in the Fall 2016 Report.
SOCIAL & CULTURE EVENTS

MUSIC, CONCERTS & DANCE

KEITH JARRETT CONCERT
• Date: February 9, 2016
• Location: Carnegie Hall
• Tickets sold: 23/23
• Ticket purchase price $45 each ($1035)
• Ticket sell price: $23 each ($900)
• Net: -$135
• Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
• Description: Keith Jarrett is internationally known as a pianist and improviser. Jarrett’s career features solo piano concerts and recordings incorporating a broad spectrum of musical languages from jazz and classical to blues, folk, and ethnic music traditions.

MONTY ALEXANDER & FRIENDS: SINATRA AT 100 WITH KURT ELLING
• Date: February 12, 2016
• Location: Lincoln Center
• Tickets sold: 24/24
• Ticket purchase price $40.5 each ($972)
• Ticket sell price: $17 each ($408)
• Net: -$564
• Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
• Description: With the help of singer Kurt Elling, Alexander will share stories and anecdotes from a treasured and rare perspective.

VICENTE AMIGO
• Date: March 4, 2016
• Location: Carnegie Hall
• Tickets sold: 24/24
• Ticket purchase price $60 each ($1440)
• Ticket sell price: $25 each ($600)
• Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
• Net: -$840
• Description: Amigo is at the forefront of a new generation of flamenco performers.

FARRUQUITO*
• Date: March 10, 2016
• Location: NY City Center
• Tickets sold: 23/23
• Ticket purchase price $90 each ($2070)
• Ticket sell price: $27 each ($621)
• Net: -$1449
• Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
• Description: Farruquito is regarded as one of the most faithful representatives of flamenco puro – the dance in its traditional state.
**AFRICA NOW***

- Date: March 26, 2016
- Location: Apollo Theatre
- Tickets sold: 13/13
- Ticket purchase price $15 each ($195)
- Ticket sell price: $15 each ($195)
- Net: $0
- Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
- Description: A musical excursion from desert blues of Niger with Bombino to the contagious rhythms of Zimbabwe's Mokoomba to the smooth vibe of Alsarah & The Nubatones' signature East African retro-pop to the experimental fusion of Jojo Abot.

**ALEXEI TARTAKOVSKY**

- Date: March 31, 2016
- Location: Kaufman Music Center/ Merkin Hall
- Tickets sold: 20/20
- Ticket purchase price: $6 each ($120)
- Ticket sell price: $6 each ($120)
- Net: $0
- Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
- Description: Alexei Tartakovsky is one of the most promising young virtuoso talents of his generation. His beautiful sound, profound musicianship, superb technique and very exciting artistic approach represent the best qualities of the Golden Age of The Russian Piano School.

**JASNA POPOVIC AND ANA TANASIJEVIC**

- Date: April 3, 2016
- Location: Lerner Hall 555
- Tickets sold: free event
- Ticket purchase price: n/a
- Ticket sell price: n/e
- Net: $0
- Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
- Description: Pianist Jasna Popovic is one of the most recognized virtuoso talents. Popovic has performed at various festivals throughout the world.

**NATHAN THE WISE***

- Date: April 8, 2016
- Location: Classic Stage Company
- Tickets sold: 12/20
- Ticket purchase price: $45 each ($900)
- Ticket sell price: $20 each ($240)
- Net: -$660
- Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
- Description: Set in Jerusalem, 1192. Muslims, Christians and Jews live side by side thanks to a fragile truce that could collapse at any moment. As the tension mounts Nathan, a pious Jewish merchant, is charged with answering: “which religion is the one most beloved by God?”
FOOD & DRINK TASTING

WINE AND CHEESE*
- Date: 2/19/2016
- Location: Murray’s Cheese
- Tickets sold: 16/16
- Ticket purchase price: $95 each ($1500)
- Ticket sell price: $38 each ($608)
- Net: -$892
- Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
- Description: Wine and Cheese 101 at Murray’s - this tasting explores 5 pairings.

SPORTS

KNICKS VS. CELTICS BASKETBALL GAME
- Date: Feb 2, 2016
- Location: Madison Square Garden
- Tickets sold: 29/29
- Ticket purchase price: $1500 for 30
- Ticket sell price: $30
- Net: - $630
- Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes

NETS VS. HORNETS*
- Date: 3/22/2016
- Location: Barclays Center
- Tickets sold: 28/28
- Ticket purchase price: $53.57 each ($1500)
- Ticket sell price: $27 each ($756)
- Net: -$744
- Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes

ISLANDERS VS. SENATORS HOCKEY GAME
- Date: 3/23/2016
- Location: Barclays Center
- Tickets sold: 25/25
- Ticket purchase price: $27 each ($675)
- Ticket sell price: $14 each ($350)
- Net: -$325
- Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes

* Culture Ambassador Organized. This semester we implemented a cultural ambassador program to allow members of the graduate community to submit a proposal for organizing and hosting a cultural event for other grads throughout the city.
HAPPY HOURS AND OTHER SOCIAL EVENTS

WELCOME BACK HAPPY HOUR with EGSC/SEAS
• Date: Jan 22, 2016
• Location: The Parlour (86th & Broadway)
• Tickets sold: 300/300
• Event cost: $2850
• Ticket sell price: Free for students, $5 for guests
• Net: -$2850
• Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes.
• GSAC volunteers required: 3
• Description: 3-hour open bar and appetizers at the Parlour on the UWS.

HAPPY HOUR AT THE GIN MILL
• Date: Feb 18, 2016
• Location: The Gin Mill (81st & Amsterdam)
• Tickets sold: 134/146
• Event cost: $2395
• Ticket sell price: 114 tickets for GSAC- $10, Guests- $15 (20/20)
• Net: -$2395
• Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
• Description: 2-hour open bar and appetizers at the Gin Mill on the Upper West Side.

SKI TRIP AT HUNTER MOUNTAIN
• Date: Feb 27, 2016
• Location: Hunter Mountain
• Tickets sold: 52/52
• Ticket purchase price: 6 Lift tickets only: $53 each, 15 Lift ticket+ rental: $87 each, 31 Beginner package: $59, Bus total cost: $1730
• Ticket sell price: 6 Lift tickets only: $63 each, 15 Lift ticket+ rental: $97 each, 31 Beginner package: $69
• Net: - $981
• Non-GSAS guests allowed: No
• GSAC volunteers required: 1
• Description: GSAC organized day trip to Hunter Mountain ski resort on a chartered bus.

GSAC BOAT CRUISE
• Date: April 14, 2016
• Location: Pier 83 (42nd and 12th)
• Tickets sold: 95/97
• Ticket purchase price: $61/per person for food, $2900 boat rental ($9000 total)
• Ticket sell price: $36.50
• Net: - $5532.50
• Non-GSAS guests allowed: Yes
• GSAC volunteers required: 2
• Description: 3-hour open bar (beer and wine), dinner on the vessel Queens!