

Dear fellow graduate student,

WELCOME to the Spring 2001 GSC Bulletin! After a long break since last summer, the GSC Bulletin is back on track and will give you quarterly updates on issues that are currently discussed in the GSC. We will also provide you with useful information about grad student life at Stanford. The GSC is your political representative at Stanford. You can help us in representing you, by letting us know what matters to you and what kind of problems you encounter in your long way to the degree. If you are interested in becoming involved, please come to our weekly meetings each Wednesday at 6pm in the back lounge of the Bechtel International Center. Since time is scarce, we also have a web site at <http://gsc.stanford.edu> that lists important announcements and the minutes of our meetings. You can also email us at gsc@stanford.edu

We look forward to hearing from you.

Your team of representatives at the GSC

The 2001 ASSU/GSC Elections

In the 2001 elections, eight undergraduate and graduate special fees were passed. Sadly, the Graduate Women's Network (the only special fee group that targeted graduate students only) did not pass. Although the majority of the graduate voters (73%) supported this fee, the overall voter turnout was too low for it to pass.

Twenty-seven graduate students were running for GSC membership. Fifteen of them were elected for the district positions or as members at-large. Their names and their goals for the coming year are listed below.

However, one doesn't have to be officially elected to become an influential member in the GSC. The GSC makes all decisions by consensus. Anyone who is willing to share their opinion (either by attending a GSC meeting or by sending e-mail to elected or non-elected GSC members), and spend some of their time helping, will have their opinion heard and considered.

District Representatives

Business - *Greg Miliotes*

Law - *Erin Adrian*

housing, parking, interdepartmental programs

Education - *Ray Rivera*

housing, minority/international students, healthcare, stipends, social events, community service

Earth Sciences - *William Curry*

housing, transportation, communication

Engineering - *Filipe Santos*

internal GSC organization, housing, health insurance, student advocacy

Engineering - *Laura Back*

housing costs, commuter parking

Hum & Sci/Humanities - *Sarah Ramirez*

women's network, healthcare, community center

Hum & Sci/Natural Sciences - *Lisa Wong*

housing, health, counseling, interdepartmental social events

Hum & Sci/Social Sciences - *Corinna Löckenhoff*

housing, women in academia, international students, GSC bulletin

Medicine - *Wendy Szeto Ho*

housing, parking, healthcare

GSC Members Elected At-Large

Elizabeth Marin

housing, commuter parking, social events (dinners, dances, hikes, book clubs)

Dave Robinson

email list, streamline funding decisions, revitalize & systematize programming, member followup/project management, special fee reform, election reform

Benjamin N. Lawrance

H&S funding, multiculturalism, diversity

Paul Andrew Higgins

interdepartmental social events, bike parking, nature resource conservation

Wendy Wright

communication

As the newly elected president and vice-president of the ASSU, we are excited and honored to represent the needs of graduate students for the upcoming school year. We applaud the efforts of the GSC and will work to ensure implementation of its past victories. Furthermore, we look forward to working together to improve issues that affect both graduate and undergraduate students, such as parking, health care, and stipends. Please know that your vision can find resource in the ASSU.

Matthew Brewer, ASSU President

Christine Cordero, ASSU Vice-President

Your Healthcare Needs You

Nick Darling, PhD student in Chemistry, Member of GHAC, GSC, and the Cowell Insurance Advisory Committee

For students at Stanford, health insurance is a mandatory expense. If you are among the 75% of graduate students or 35% of undergraduates who purchase health insurance through Cardinal Care, then I've got news for you: the Cowell Insurance Advisory Committee needs your help! Talk to us. We on the committee know how important healthcare is, and we learn how much it costs. Faced with potential rate increases of 50% for next year in Cardinal Care's dependent plan, we are asking the University to help cover costs and keep Cardinal Care a viable option for next year.

Some of the students on the committee feel that Stanford should cover health insurance for all graduate students, just as they pay for other required costs associated with being a student here. At the moment, Cardinal Care is fully funded by student contributions, and all of the costs are paid with after-tax dollars. In other words, 15% or more of this money flows from Stanford directly to the government instead of going to pay for student healthcare.

Certainly the underlying costs and benefits that make up the Cardinal Care plan also need to be analyzed to ensure that they are serving the needs of the Stanford community. I hope this will be a focus of the committee next year. For everyone who has an opinion to share, please join student representatives from the committee to discuss future healthcare strategy in the Bechtel International Center on Thursday, May 24th at 3pm.

Our Long and Winding Road

Hunter Tart, PhD Student in Mathematics, GSC Member

To paraphrase a memorable line from erstwhile U.S. vice-presidential candidate James Stockdale, "Who are we? Why are we here?" This query, which has probably percolated through numerous bike helmet-clad grad student noggins, impels us to narrate how exactly the Graduate Student Council came to be.

A predecessor of the GSC, called the Graduate Student Association, brought together students from various districts to serve graduate interests and to plan social events from at least the late 1960s until the early '90s. In its later years, the GSA depended on undergrad and grad students collectively to approve its annual Special Fee funding requests.

The fun and games unfortunately ended rather abruptly in the 1993 ASSU elections when students (primarily undergraduates) voted down the GSA Special Fee. For a few years, graduate students were left with few groups providing interdepartmental social planning and no effective advocacy body.

In 1996-97, several physics Ph.D. students decided to fill the void by creating a new grad student group in place of the old GSA. The Graduate Student Council became an adjunct of the ASSU, with representatives elected from various districts each spring. The new GSC had a rather audacious start. With limited personnel and resources, it instituted a number of lasting social events, like Grad Nights at the CoHo and at Flicks. It also organized students to fight against costly U.S. tax code changes with the first in a series of informative emails sent to nearly every grad student.

The GSC quickly expanded its purview by launching the larg-

GSPB - the Graduate Student Programming Board

Kaleb Michaud, PhD Student in Physics, GSC/GSPB Member

Though we are a university group, we work closely with the GSC and the Graduate Life Office in providing activities and events available for all graduate students and their communities. We hold weekly meetings on Mondays from 12 to 1pm in the International Center (Back Lounge). Lunch is provided. We have two openings for a paid co-chair position for next year. Some of our upcoming events include: Copabacana Part II, Salsa party in the Oak Room of Tresidder Union on Friday, May 18, 9pm-1am; and a large House Party in Hacienda Commons of Rains on Saturday, June 2 from 9pm-1am. Check out our web page for up-to-date descriptions of events, past and future. <http://www.stanford.edu/group/gspb/>

est grad student advocacy initiative in years: a push for more affordable housing. After writing a 200-page report based on an extensive survey, the GSC's housing task force brought together over 1,500 students on May 27, 1998 for the "Campout on the Quad" housing rally. The rally and on-going GSC efforts have directly led to dramatic changes in housing policies and large-scale increases in the supply of graduate student housing.

In 1999, students passed a sweeping revision of the ASSU Constitution which separated the grad and undergrad populations and instated the GSC as the sole graduate representative body. As a result of this change, graduate fee money is now under the complete control of graduate representatives and grad students are able to work on causes they think are important with a minimum of ASSU bureaucratic hassles. The Council has continued to make strides by hosting a free Thanksgiving dinner each year for hundreds of students, supporting new student groups financially, advocating for affordable health care for students' dependents, negotiating for higher student stipends, providing tax advice and software, and working on numerous other projects.

With continued infusions of passionate students willing to work on important issues, the GSC promises to stick around for quite a while.

Read a more complete version of this article at http://gsc.stanford.edu/gsc_history.htm

Did you know?

Want to describe your research so others understand what you're doing and why? Check out the I-RITE (Integrating Research into the Teaching Environment) website to find out more:

<http://i-rite.stanford.edu>

i-rite@sll.stanford.edu

GSC Report on Housing

Sijm Van Nieuwerburgh, PhD Student in Economics, Chair GHAC and GSC Member

Among the most pressing problems for graduate students are the shortage of housing and the high rents in the area. The GSC's advocacy on this topic has long lasting roots. In December 2000, Santa Clara County passed Stanford's general use permit (GUP) after nearly two years of discussions, public hearings, and lobbying by graduate students, the university, environmental groups, and Stanford's neighbors. The GUP sets out guidelines for the development of Stanford over the next decade. It allows Stanford to build a net of 2000 new housing units for graduate and undergraduate students.

The university currently has serious plans to build 1400 additional housing units in Escondido Village. The first 500 units will be studios, just like the studios that have been completed at the end of the winter quarter. Graduate students have been involved in the design and fine-tuning of the buildings. Ground breaking will start this summer and the first 250 units will be ready in the fall of 2002. It will be until 2010 before all 1400 units will be completed. At the end of the construction process, the university will be able to house 70% of its graduate student population, compared to just 45% today.

In addition, plans are under way to construct a community center in EV. The center would contain a large room for social activities, a bar and coffee house, a game room, a TV room, a computer cluster and offices for graduate student organizations. The current plan is to build the center on Escondido Road by the Fall of 2003. The center would be accompanied by a large parking structure that would replace the Blackwelder parking lot.

In the meantime the student representatives of the Graduate Housing Advisory Committee (GHAC) and the GSC have been working hard with the university's housing office and its administration to alleviate the housing crisis in the short run. We are happy to announce that the current off-campus subsidized system will continue into next year and will grow by an additional 200 units, making a total of 800 units. The university has already been successful in securing the bulk of these 200 extra units. Some students have been offered the possibility of moving closer to campus. The graduate life office will start a pilot project that appoints CA's in the large subsidized off-campus residences in order to stimulate social interaction between students living far from campus. Also, the university will start to enforce priority years off-campus.

Furthermore, President Hennessy has approved a new cash supplement system starting in the Fall. There will be a separate lottery in July where 300 cash supplements of \$275 per month will be distributed. This lottery is open to all graduate students, including students that do not enter the on-campus housing lottery. The idea is to give support to students living off-campus who have been hit hard by recent rent increases. Also, students will be able to rent rooms in private houses that the university cannot rent.

Finally, for the on-campus housing lottery, some changes came in effect. You could select the lottery option 006 (willing to live anywhere) and refuse any on-campus assignment that does not give you a private bedroom without losing the right to apply for subsidized off-campus housing later in June. The growing disparity between the couples and singles housing shortage will be addressed by converting about 25 single apartments into couples apartments next year.

[Housing Assignment Services Website:](http://www.stanford.edu/dept/hds/has/)

<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/hds/has/>

[GSC Housing Page:](http://gsc.stanford.edu/gsc_housing.htm)

http://gsc.stanford.edu/gsc_housing.htm

[Questions? Concerns? Want to get involved?](mailto:gsc@stanford.edu)

[Email: gsc@stanford.edu](mailto:gsc@stanford.edu)

Families and Childcare

King Lam, Graduate Student in Mechanical Engineering and GSC Member

The GSC has been involved with addressing child care issues as they pertain to graduate student families; child care cost and availability are of the utmost importance. To help address these issues, the GSC is represented in the Child Care Working Group. This working group is responsible for assessing the child care needs at Stanford and working toward meeting these needs. The group has made significant progress in areas such as the capital improvement of current campus child care centers and is currently re-evaluating the university's child care policy. It is vital, especially to the several hundred children and parents of the graduate student community that the GSC maintains a close relationship with the Child Care Working Group to work toward possibilities such as graduate parent subsidies. The GSC is currently looking for a graduate student to represent the GSC on this working group.

If you are interested in family events or child care issues, please contact King Lam at kinglam@stanfordalumni.org

Need Funding?

Amalia Miller, Graduate Student in Economics, Funding Committee Chair and GSC Member

For the past two years, the GSC has had the important function of allocating funding to Graduate Student Organizations. In that time, there has been tremendous growth in the quantity and scope of the funding applications and number of active graduate groups seeking funding.

If you are a member of a graduate group, and are interested in this opportunity, check out the GSC funding web page at http://gsc.stanford.edu/gsc_funding.htm There you will find the eligibility criteria and details about the funding process, like what to include in your proposal. There are no fixed application dates, and your request can cover a single event, a quarter, or the academic year. The GSC funding committee discusses each proposal and presents recommendations to the full GSC. Funding committee meetings and regular GSC meetings are open to all.

This year, we received proposals from over 50 graduate groups, and supported them in a wide range of social, educational, community service and cultural events. Funded events are open and accessible to the entire graduate population, and budgets are available online at the GSC funding page.

If you have questions, suggestions or would like to get involved, email the GSC Funding Committee Chair at


gsc-fcc@assu.stanford.edu .

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