



General Assembly Meeting

2021-10-14 @ 2:30 PM

Online via [Zoom](#)

Advisors/Graduate Student Life

Austin A Deray (Assistant Director, Graduate Student Life)

Julie Choe Kim (Advisor, and Director, Graduate Student Life)

GAPSA Executive Officers

Steven Zhou (President)

Wai Ling Fong (Executive Vice President)

Dylan V. Scarton (VP of Fairfax)

Troi Dixon (VP of Arlington)

Marissa Howard (VP of SciTech)

Jane Aronds (Director of Communications)

Guests

Kristin Leonato (University Career Services)

Rose Pascarell, Vice President of University Life (University Life)

Kevin Connor, Graduate Education Reimagine Task Force (Master's of Business Administration and School of Business)

Andy Hoefler, Graduate Education Reimagine Task Force (Honors College)

Laurence Bray, Associate Provost for Graduate Education (Provost's Office)

Program Representatives

Aayushi Hingle (Doctoral, Communication Department)

Alamin Molla (Doctoral, Geography and Geoinformation Sciences)

Alexandra (Xan) Chen (Master's, Psychology)

Aleyah Dawkins (Doctoral, Mathematics)

Andrew Leisner (Doctoral, Physics)

Anna Tsybko (Master's, School of Business)

Antarjot (Master's, Bioengineering)

Apollo Yong (JD, Antonin Scalia Law School)

Ashish Hingle (Doctoral, IT)

Christopher Russo (Doctoral, Economics)

Dani Harrison (Master's, Chemistry)

Dina Abdo (Doctoral, Health Administration and Policy)

Douglas Nedza (Doctoral, Atmospheric, Oceanic and Earth Sciences (AOES))
Drew Bonner (Doctoral, Sociology)
Emily Jeffries (Master's, Public Policy)
Emily Richard (Doctoral, Psychology (CBN))
Esteline Marie Pascua (Master's, Real Estate Development)
Eunice Kim (Master's, English)
Greta Swain (Doctoral, History)
Haley Todd (Doctoral, Linguistics)
Huy Phan (Master's, Social Work)
Ian Hamilton (Master's, Applied Industrial and Organizational Psychology MPS program)
Isaac Gibbons (Master's, Cybersecurity Engineering)
Jonathan Marine (Doctoral, English)
Kathleen Klingenberg (Master's, Art History)
Kelsey Mitchell (Doctoral, Neuroscience)
Kimberly C Talley (Master's, International Security)
Krista Beran (Doctoral, Nursing)
Leslie Escobar (Master's, Higher Education and Student Development)
Melissa Schexnaydre (Master's, Arts Management)
Nia Pollard (Doctoral, Chemistry)
Ninon Nelson (Master's, Global Affairs)
Oakley T Hill (Doctoral, Conflict Analysis and Resolution)
Olugbemi Aroke (Doctoral, Civil, Environmental and Infrastructure Engineering)
Peng Warweg (Master's, Learning Design and Technology)
Peter McEachern (Master's, Psychology)
Piper Biery (Doctoral, Political Science)
Precious Ugwu (Master's, Public Health)
Shrishti Singh (Doctoral, Bioengineering)
Shuai Wang (Doctoral, Computer Science)
Susannah E Barnes (Master's, Economics)
Sydnee Bryant (Masters, 'Sport and Recreation Studies)
Terilee Edwards-Hewitt (Doctoral, Cultural Studies)
Yang Long (Doctoral, Statistics)
Zachary Machuga (Master's, Earth Systems Science)

Agenda

2:30 PM - 2:35 PM Announcements

Check in!

Name, Email, and Profile Pic for website

Poll: In-person meetings?

Breakout room topics from last time are advancing work in Slack channels

Instagram Takeover

Building Community for Grad Students of Diverse Identities

Mason in Color Showcase & Other PAC Opportunities

- 2:35 PM - 3:00 PM Special Guest: Kristin Leonato, Associate Director at University Career Services
Topic: Graduate Student Career Services
- 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM Special Guest: Rose Pascarell, Vice President for University Life
Topic: Graduate Student Housing (or other student life questions)
- 3:30 PM - 4:00 PM Special Guests: Graduate Education Task Force Members
Kevin Connor, Associate Director of Admissions, School of Business
Anthony Hoefler, Assistant Dean, Honors College
Laurence Bray, Associate Provost, Graduate Education
Topic: Graduate Student Education Restructuring

Minutes

1. For attendance tracking, all participants were requested to fill in a Google Form at the beginning of the meeting.
2. GAPSAs President, Steven Zhou began the meeting with the reminders/announcements.
 - Program Representatives to send profile pictures for GAPSAs to update the General Assembly roster.
 - The General Assembly will still be online for the foreseeable future due to the large number of attendees. Steven will gather consensus feedback if there is a preference for an in-person or virtual meeting for the future. There will always be a virtual option.
 - Reminder to check breakout room topics from Sept 23, 2021 on Slack for updates.
3. Special Guest: Kristin Leonato, Associate Director at University Career Services
Topic: Graduate Student Career Services
 - Kristin presented on the types of services, and resources from [University Career Services \(UCS\)](#) that are available for graduate students.
 - UCS provides career planning services, resume and LinkedIn profile reviews, industry advising consultation, interview preparation, salary negotiation workshops, and career fairs.
 - [Career Readiness Guide](#) is a resource for students to plan their career readiness. There is a PDF copy for download or hard copies which can be picked up from the UCS office.
 - UCS connects students to private and federal employers through employer networks and career fairs.
 - Students can receive consultation on how to use Handshake, Mason's job search platform.

- Interview preparation is an underutilized resource at UCS and all graduate students are welcomed to use the service.
- There is a three-year strategic plan for UCS on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Students are welcomed to make appointments with the UCS in-person or [virtually](#). There are also virtual career services consultations available during after-work hours.
- Kristin's slides were shared with GA representatives after the meeting, and they were encouraged to pass them on to their peers.

4. Special Guest: Rose Pascarell, Vice President for University Life

Topic: Graduate Student Housing (or other student life questions)

- Rose provided an overview of the functions of University Life (UL) and its primary role to support students through inclusive thriving communities, equity, and holistic student support, health, and well-being, and contemporary student services for non-traditional students. There are currently 350 professional staff members, over a 100 student assistants, and 80 graduate assistants in University Life.
- Well-being and wellness is an important focus area within UL where the goal is to support students' needs at the university. Some of the highlighted services at UL with a focus on well-being, and health.
 - The [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS), and [Student Health Services](#) (SHS) are available for all students regardless of insurance availability.
 - [Patriot Pantry](#), Mason's food pantry is available on campus for all students who identify as food insecure. Patriot Pantry is managed by [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#), which runs programs on safe campus culture, alcohol, and substance education, and support for domestic violence survivors.
 - [The Center for Advancement and Well-Being](#) organizes programs that focus on well-being, resiliency, and racial equity programs like the Racial Healing Circles.
 - There will be additional graduate student housing on the Fairfax campus in Spring 2022 with careful considerations for privacy and space utilization appropriate for graduate students. Additional housing in Arlington, and SciTech campuses with a prioritization for incoming first year students are also in the plans.

5. Special Guests: Graduate Education Task Force Members

Kevin Connor, Associate Director of Admissions, School of Business
 Anthony Hoefler, Assistant Dean, Honors College

Laurence Bray, Associate Provost, Graduate Education

Topic: Graduate Student Education Restructuring

- The Graduate Education Task Force was charged by the President and Provost to consider critical issues and state of affairs for graduate students at Mason.
- The goal of the task force is to enhance programming and support services to serve the academic needs (retention, degree completion), research needs, and career preparation for graduate students.
 - To create a centralized, and open portal for graduate students to access information on available funding.
 - To grow the mentoring and advising resources which include interdisciplinary connections.
 - To increase an awareness of all central resources that leads to students' higher well-being, student engagement, and community building.
 - To create lifelong, multi-career professional development opportunities.
 - To coordinate collaborative research and professional programming.
 - To create stronger, and better connections in the Mason Graduate Student Alumni base.
 - To enhance training opportunities for postdocs and MFA fellows.
- There is a critical need to elevate Graduate Education at Mason as an R1 institution.
 - Current identified needs are a lack of effective coordination, and organization across graduate programs.
 - Inconsistency in holistic graduate student experience.
 - There is a lack of support for multi-career preparation to meet workforce needs.
 - Insufficient graduate education funding.
 - Minimal access to inter- and transdisciplinary research opportunities and infrastructure.
- Current programming and support services structure for graduate students include;
 - Office of Graduate Education (Institutional Graduate Funding and Hiring)
 - Schools, Colleges, or Departments (Individual Units)
 - Central Services (Advancement, and Alumni Relations, Libraries, University Life, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Research, Innovation, and Economic Impact, Graduate Services, Academic Affairs, Institutional Effectiveness and Planning)
- To read the Graduate Education Task Force Report, click [here](#). All attendees were encouraged to provide feedback on the report [here](#).