

UMCES Graduate Student Council Meeting  
November 5, 2020  
9-10am

In attendance: Anna Windle, Taylor Armstrong, Amber Fandel, Alex Gibbs, Tan Zou, Kia Ramarui, Amy Griffin, Daniella Hanacek

1. USMSC, Admin Council, UMCES/MEES PC Updates
  - a. USMSC- Anna/Kia attend meetings once a month
    - i. Voted on new VP of graduate affairs- Laura Belko (grad student at UMGC). Kia and I met with her one on one so she could get to know UMCES better.
      1. Trying to facilitate better cross-communication between leaders at each USM institution
    - ii. Voted on Department of Homeland Security rule (can be found [here](#)).
      1. If passed, the rule would result in devastating consequences for international students who are part of F and J non-immigrant visa programs by introducing restrictions that misalign with the realities of completing higher education programs in the United States.
      2. USMSC sent statement of opposition to DHS's proposed rule (let me know if you'd like a copy):
      3. Brought up with Dave and Larry but they advised not to send to students until we see something from the Attorney General's office, which he hasn't yet.
  - b. Admin Council- Met in September
    - i. Brought up an issue with graduate assistantships
      1. Seems like students always have some confusion on registering for credits/units and many have been registering for much too many since their graduate assistantship automatically counts as either 24 or 12 units based on their assistantship appointment (full-time or part-time). Amy and I looked into this and we think that it is unclear for students and not explicitly stated anywhere. We are proposing to make assistant appointment contracts, modeling after UMD. Would send out an initial offer letter to new students and once an offer is accepted, would send a second communication in the form of a contract that includes information about stipend, expectations, registering for units/credits, etc.
      2. Amy and Larry met with UMD graduate school to figure this out; CP said that as long as you are on an assistantship, you have to stay full time. However, this language is not explicitly written anywhere in the CP resources. Amy requested that if this is the policy, the language needs to be incorporated in a written form

somewhere. Once we have this policy in writing somewhere, Amy will let us know...

- c. MEES PC- Met in September and October (morning of MEES Colloquium but Anna missed due to MEES Student Meeting)
  - i. MEES Office has established very helpful forms on their website (directed research section numbers, dissertation/thesis announcements, email subscription and student contact form)
    1. While organizing the MEES All student meeting, Anna realized that some emails on the MEES student list-serv were emails students used to apply to the MEES program (a lot of other .edu or personal emails). Many MEES students haven't been receiving any MEES communication. To help with this, MEES office started an [email subscription and student info form](#).
      - a. Need to have all students fill out. At the next grad student meeting at each lab, GSC reps should remind students to do this.
      - b. Need to remember to have all new students every semester fill this out
    - ii. MEES GSO- It is very apparent that the MEES program would benefit from a student organization that facilitates communication between all 5 campuses.
      1. Anna believes the MEES GSO should be separate from the UMCES GSC- different representatives. (gets too confusing with same reps on GSO/GSC)
      2. Three interested UMCES students, 1 UMES
        - a. Kia/Taylor- do you know any UMBC/UMB students at IMET that would be interested in serving?
      3. Would regularly meet with Tim and provide input into MEES-related issues
2. Discussion on GSC email and social media
  - a. Should we make a GSC email and twitter account?
    - i. Overall, everyone was on board about having a GSC email. We could share the login and password with all the GSC so anyone could check it or send emails from it.
    - ii. Generally people were open to a twitter account too, but people asked what else we would post on it. Amy brought up that we may need to run posts by Amy Pelsinsky -- we'll need to double check
3. Progress of GSC tasks
  - a. Update bylaws, policies, procedures, handbook- Anna and Kia
    - i. More details pending...
  - b. Review of UMCES website/student resources- Amber with Amy

- i. Amy emailed Amy P. and Emily R. about how a lot of these things need to be more front facing
    - ii. Amy and Amber will meet again with them
    - iii. Ongoing discussion about putting funding on that page (grants, assistantships, etc.) ⇒ spreadsheet with funding
    - iv. Welcome page @ CBL, buddy program, etc.
  - c. International Student Resources- Daniella, Tan
    - i. Updated the international student guide (all links are updated)
    - ii. The initial version was just from one lab, so now they've added info from the other labs
    - iii. Next, update information in the student handbook related to international students
    - iv. Daniella -- can we try to set up an event where someone from the CP office of international affairs can come and talk to UMCES international students?
      - 1. This way, UMCES students know who they can go to at CP when they need help.
      - 2. Having one person from that office that specifically can help UMCES students would be really helpful...
      - 3. They have a lot of really good resources
  - d. Diversity Initiative- Anna, Kia
    - i. Kia and Anna talked with UMD office of diversity and inclusion and were working with the DEIC, now letting the DEIC take the lead...more details in the DEIC section below
  - e. Ombuds- Taylor, Alex
    - i. Amy sent a lot of resources as a jumping off point
  - f. Code of Conduct- Claire
    - i. She is finishing up a draft code of conduct this weekend -- hoping to have more updates next meeting
- 4. Updates from DEIC - Claire and Amy
  - a. Amy requested honest feedback about the open DEIC meeting (send her feedback if you have it)
  - b. Identified three initiatives/top three priorities as a result of the last open DEIC meeting
  - c. Also talked about getting resources together (Amy has been trying to keep a list of resources that have been sent to her, but she wants to try to formalize it and try to publish a page of the website with readings, videos, other resources, etc.)
  - d. Amber talked about a Google drive repository with an associated spreadsheet outlining and organizing all the resources.
- 5. Chancellor Perman Meet-ups
  - a. Anna and Christina went to first meeting, Kia went to second one. Informal Zoom meetings where students can share ideas with Chancellor Perman. He

mentioned he took those ideas to the BoR meeting.

6. Any other updates?

- a. We didn't talk much about this at the meeting, but Kia and Christine Knuass are planning a budget management webinar for UMCES students and have asked Nina Lamba from IMET to present. This event will be on Nov 20th, an email will be sent out next week. This stemmed from a request from Christine who while on the job hunt, realized budget planning and management are important and desirable skills for a lot of careers after grad school. I'd like to continue these professional development workshops for students, so if you have an idea for one, let me know and we can try to set up more in 2021.