

UMCES Graduate Student Council Meeting
December 6th, 2021
11:00am-12:30pm

In attendance: Anna Windle, Kia Ramarui, Amy Griffin, Sarah Jones, Tan Zou, Taylor Armstrong, Majeed Alrefaie, Maddy Lahm, Yvonne Harper

- 1) Yvonne, USMSC President will join at 12:00pm
- 2) USM Student Council (USMSC), Admin Council, COVID Communication Team Updates, DEIC Updates:
 - a) USMSC
 - i) Sep- Introduction
 - ii) Oct- Chancellor Jay Perman came to talk
 - iii) Nov- Discussion of student issues w/ Director of Student Affairs
 - (1) Common themes: student fees, opening dialogs about this with admin level, challenges and approaches
 - iv) Dec- voted for student regents (4 students nominated)
 - b) Admin Council Updates
 - i) Last met in Nov. Not much to report back on. Anna gave a student update
 - c) COVID Communications Updates
 - i) Masks still required on campus
 - ii) Meeting Wednesday to discuss what to potentially prepare for next semester- Potential testing requirements
 - d) DEIC Updates (Open meetings every other month)
 - i) No student wanted to be rep on DEIC so Anna and Kia are serving as both GSC and student reps. Please let Anna or Kia know if you or a student at your lab is interested in serving as student rep on DEIC
 - ii) Code of Principles approved by every shared governance, plans to make signage for labs
 - iii) Kardia Group listening sessions occurred
 - (1) Female grad students had about 15 in attendance, no one showed for male graduate students :(
 - iv) AGU survey sent out
 - v) Kardia is writing a report summarizing findings from both assessments and will deliver this to core DEIC and EC. Will work with EC to implement recommendations.
- 3) GA Stipends
 - a) Students got an email from UMCP Provost about raising GA stipends (8% raise). Anna initially reached out to Lynn Rehn (VP of Administration) to see if raises applied to UMCES students. Lynn and Anna spoke on the phone and Lynn

needed the week to answer some questions regarding this. Led to an email from Larry that Anna forwarded to GSC

- b) Larry mentioned they will create a committee to evaluate and/or adjust stipends.
- c) Anna responded with cost of living estimates for each county and recommended that cost of living be re-evaluated to make sure students are able to afford where they live. No response to this email
- d) Discussed comparison of cost of living across labs.
- e) Anna will reach out to UMB rep on USMSC to learn how they were successful in raising GA stipends
- f) Anna will send When2Meet to organize meeting on this topic in January

4) GSC Budget

- a) Few months back, Anna asked Lynn Rehn about the possibility of getting a GSC budget in order to provide honorariums for speakers, hire workshop presenters, etc. She said she can allocate \$5,000 from CA to GSC for this year.
- b) Ideas on how to use this money?
 - i) Anna- Potential Twitter/Science Communication workshop
 - ii) Something to benefit all foundations?
 - iii) Survey students - what workshops interest them, any suggestions, fun activities to get together?
 - iv) Pay for dinner? Maybe wait until warm weather for outdoor gathering
 - v) [Daniella Hanacek](#) - idea to pay/incentivize student to assist new students
 - vi) Maybe labs take turns "hosting" gatherings - mini colloquiums, presenting seminar/research, travel

5) President's Monthly Meetings

- a) Will start back up in the Spring

6) UMCES Student Voter Engagement Plan 2022

- a) Amy- UMCES student voter engagement - law in maryland giving students access to "how to register/where to vote" etc, Amy is Rep for UMCES, plan in place starting june/july to get information out to students with all this information to facilitate voting

7) Statement of Mutual Expectations

- a) Amy- Larry and Amy made more edits to help reach mutual understanding and agreement of expectations. Want additional feedback from GSC

8) Comprehensive Exam Guidelines

- a) Larry sent email on finalized guidelines- sent to all faculty and students and can be found online

- b) Bulk of UMCES faculty in different programs - worked really hard to provide more guidelines for consistency across different PhD candidacies and committee member expectations
- 9) Fall 2022 ISG topics
- a) Amy- Three potential topics for Fall 2022, not sure how many will run but two typically run
 - b) UMCES PCC will decide final approvals
- 10) AES Feedback
- a) Anna, Kia, Meg and Tori have been working together to address UMCES/MEES admin and AES course instructors about ongoing student concerns about the AES course
 - b) Summarized survey responses and sent letter to Larry, Tim, Tom, Carys, Bill
 - c) All of us met in late Nov to discuss
 - i) Consensus was a cohort based class is important and should happen
 - ii) Recommendations have been put out there but results are uncertain.
 - d) Plan to have another meeting in Dec to discuss course 'Products'
 - e) Results of survey will be sent out to students soon.
- 11) Updates on ongoing tasks, upcoming student opportunities
- a) Updating GSC Bylaws/Policy
 - b) Ombuds?
 - c) Chancellor Meet-ups- report back from Sarah
 - i) Sarah - attended previous meeting about Mental Health, specific about counseling and resources within institution, cool to listen to different students in different programs and shared experiences
- 12) Other updates
- a) UMCES swag? TBD

Action Items:

- (From last meeting) Create draft email for reps to send out at beginning of semester with guidelines, reminders, etc
- Organize thoughts/plans to discuss GA stipends
- Beta testing statement of mutual expectations with our advisors. Provide feedback to Amy.