

GSA report to ICU Council
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The GSA has been stuck in the introduction phase for a long time. This year we hope to move it into the growth phase and build GSA brand recognition through communication of College agendas and improved attendance at GSA led events.

The GSA Executive Committee – has resumed monthly meetings for the time being. We have now established a good core group of reliable, enthusiastic and talented individuals. Neki Patel (Physical Sciences AO) and Patrick Wray (GSA EC Secretary) are our stalwarts who have stuck with us through the disjointed winter. Jon Silver introduced our new AOs Joe McKenna for Life Sciences and Llewellyn Thomas for Non-Faculty at the last council meeting. Our newest members are Nuri Purswani & Shiv Singh who are Events Coordinators and Rika Nair is being recruited to fill the role of Press Officer. Currently our Non-Faculty AO is acting as Treasurer. The GSA Chair attended our last meeting and said he would be submitting a report on his recent absence to this council. The only other problem we are having with reporting and attendance is with our AO for Engineering and steps are being taken to determine which direction we should take next. The GSA is very grateful for the support that we are receiving from the Union through Ashley Brown (President), Jon Silver (Dep Pres Education) and Phil Power (ICU Membership Services) as well as from the Graduate Schools through Caroline Hargreaves (Transferable Skills Tutor) and George Yeorghaki (Transferable Skills & Events Coordinator).

Official Documents – of the GSA, such as the Standing Orders are currently being reviewed with the intention of rewriting it into a constitution and submitting to the ICU Executive Committee(?) soon. Albeit late in the year, members of the GSA EC are acquainting themselves with the ICU Constitution, ICU Representation Policy and College Staff-Student Committee Good Practice Guidelines. We also aim to write up a Terms of Reference for the GSA EC, which will hold all important info on how meetings should be conducted in future including a standing agenda. The GSA Handbooks for AOs and Dep Reps will need revision.

Communication – starts with knowing who to communicate with. The AOs of the GSA are currently working closely with Jon Silver to develop an organogram of Departmental Reps for each faculty and email lists on Outlook to match. In the past all of this info was kept on spreadsheets, which were only accessible by a few who were too worried about spam to share them. We started compiling this information with a two pronged approach: 1) We made a PG Rep Registration Form and requested via email to all PG students that reps complete it. 2) Sally Baker (GSLSM Manager) and Sophie White (GSEPS Manager) emailed all DPSs on behalf of Andrew George (GSLSM Director) and Richard Kitney (GSEPS Director) to request that they send us info on the identity of existing departmental representatives.

Michael Larsson presented his vision of a college-wide online discussion forum at the last GSA EC meeting. The GSA pledged our support and recommended that he bring together interested people to start a working group. Jon Silver also said he would help get things rolling.

Committee meetings – Staff-Student Committee meetings are being attended by at least one AO at the Faculty level. We are working on identifying the time and location of Departmental SSC meetings as well as their attendance. Academic Affairs Committee meetings between AOs and Dep Reps will be called as soon as the communication structure in place at which point the reporting on meetings attended will be expected to improve.

Finances – The GSA plans to submit a request for grants to the RWB on May 4th.

Events – There GSA is building an events planning subcommittee. Nuri Purswani is currently taking a lead role in this and adverts for a meeting will be emailed out shortly. Jenny Wilson (Dep Pres C&S) is helping her set up an email address and email list.

Press – Phil Powers and Tom Roberts are developing a GSA Newsletter template. Postscript is taking a back seat at the moment as the GSA Coordinator was doing it all on their own and that did not support continuity.

Marketing – The GSA is looking for a Marketing Director. The role of the marketing director will be related to generating income for the GSA. Possible routes that will be pursued are a T-shirt design competition and corporate sponsorship for events.