

PGSA Committee Meeting
10 September 2013

chair: Bob Niffenegger
treasurer: Jacques Pienaar
secretary: Antoine Martin

attendants:

Reza Afra
David Garand (research progress & HR)
Antoine Martin (secretary)
Bob Niffenegger (president)
Kelsie Niffenegger (teaching & professional development)
Harshad Sahasrabudhe (webmaster)

Minutes:

Meeting begins.

18:05 – Diversity Committee (David)

- Our diversity committee has to meet with Prof. Hirsch.

18:09 – New Faculty

- In the past, organized lunches have allowed graduate students to meet potential new faculty. Can we find a way for graduate students to also have a say regarding who gets hired?

18:12 – Graduate Student Manual & Prelim

- current manual problems:
 - self-contradictory
 - redundant
 - unclear about issues such as the prelim
- Prof. Lang has been insisting that the graduate student manual be rewritten with help from current students.
- Advisors should help and push their students to complete their prelims, for which there should be deadlines.
- Prelim length should be limited in number of pages.
- Some of us should speak with Prof. Lang regarding prelim statistics.
- We may consider making an institutional memory of faculty for whom not to work. For instance, professors who do too little to help students along, who do not get students through prelims and to defenses in a timely manner, may earn having their names added to this institutional memory.
- We can create an exit survey for students leaving the department.
 - We should find a way to keep it anonymous.

- It should focus on faculty and help newer students choose better advisors.
- Should only students graduating with Ph.D.s take the survey?

18:31 – Help Center

- Prof. Hirsch also finds Sunday hours ludicrous. Have they already been eliminated?
- There are no Wednesday hours.
- Last year, there was a Help Center committee that collected data on the center's effectiveness and helped change its schedule to better fit undergraduate students' needs. Now that the changes are in effect, we should collect data again and check for improvement.

18:37 – Next Meeting and Graduate Student Seminar

- The next PGSA Committee meeting should take place in 2 weeks.
- The next graduate student seminar should take place in 3 weeks.

18:38 – Meeting ends.

33 minutes
