

PGSA Committee Meeting  
24 January 2017

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chair: Andy Hesselbrock  
treasurer: Jacques Pienaar  
secretary: Antoine Martin

attendants:

Peter Anderson  
Jared Bland  
Ian Christie  
Mri Damodaran  
Matt Eiles (vice president)  
Darren Erdman  
Brian Fields  
Andy Hesselbrock (president)  
Abhilash Reddy Kalam  
Antoine Martin (secretary)  
Darryl Masson  
Riddhi Mehta  
Jacques Pienaar (treasurer)  
Cassie Reuter  
Kate Schreiber  
Troy Seberson (PGSG senator)  
Akhil Sheoran

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Minutes:

17:03 – Meeting begins.

finances

- PGSA's funds:
  - \$500 for year's social events over the entire year.
  - \$140 for outreach
  - \$120 adopt-a-road
  - \$300 for grad seminar
- Can we hold an open Q&A session with people who have jobs in physics?
- social event proposed (Peter to be responsible): Order pizza and clean up / organize Room 19.
- For unknown reasons, PGSA may not buy furniture.
  - Does this restriction extend to microwaves? May we buy one? Should we just take care of the one we already have?

17:08 grad seminar

- Jared has five or six speakers lined up.
- We may hold March Meeting practice talks.

17:09 Chinese Lantern Festival

- After a vast brainstorm, the committee decides to forget Chinese New Year and celebrate the Chinese Lantern Festival instead, on February 10 at 17:00.
- PGSA needs to buy food and figure out how to make lanterns.
- Launching lanterns would be illegal in Indiana because of the fire hazard, but that will not stop us from making them.

17:27 – shooting range

- Professors Koltick and Ritchie have guns and ammo and have participated in such an activity with PGSA, a few years ago.
- The shooting range is near the mall.
- We should try to rent space on a Friday.
- Given that we are not allowed to pay them directly, how shall we “reimburse” the professors for the ammo they will provide?
  - petty cash (~\$150 available)?
  - treat them to lunch / dinner?

17:37 – website

- Andy will kindly email Harshad a reminder to take care of the website.

17:37 – social events

- suggested social events:
  - Argonne National Lab tour
  - ice skating
  - paintballing (popular in the past)
  - zip lining

17:39 – qualifying exam format modification

- suggested change: Students fail or pass each of the four sections (subjects) individually.
  - This takes some pressure off, allowing students to focus on their weaknesses after passing the tests in their strong suits.
  - This increases the pressure by requiring students to eventually be proficient in all four subjects. The qualifier may become less forgiving to students who would have passed by excelling in some subjects to make up for performing execrably in others.
- An overwhelming majority of committee votes in favor of this change.
- Physics 521, which currently sweeps a lot of statistical mechanics under the rug in favor of classical mechanics and E & M, would have to be restructured.
- Physics 550 may also need revisions.
- Andy will relate this to Prof. Finley.

17:46 – T-shirts

- Sandy wants some T-shirts for the open house.
- Many undergrads are interested in T-shirts as well.
- David Sederberg advertises our shirts.

17:47 – Andy will start sending PGSA Science on Tap emails.

17:49 – Senator Troy announces that PGSG wants us to know there is a career / job fair.

17:50 – Meeting ends.

47 minutes

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