

HGSA
General Meeting Minutes
Friday, April 24th, 2009

Members Present: Lee Ann Hall, Jennifer Brown, Jennifer Reynolds, Nathan Roberts, Lorelei Sterling, Chris Schlect, Laura Arata

Members Absent: Torsten Homberger

Meeting called to order 2:10 pm.

Program Revisions—

- Dr. Pietz attended the meeting and invited students to see him with any issues or concerns they might have.
- On the verge of revising the graduate program—more information is forthcoming on this.
- The program will look different than it has in the past and from what appears on the history department website at the present time.
- Students already in the program may be “grandfathered” through changed requirements
- A note on this should be included in the HGSA Newsletter
- A question was raised on when incoming students can register for classes—it was decided that a note should be included in the HGSA Newsletter regarding declaring residency, medical clearance requirements, etc.
- Dr. Pietz noted that it is not entirely clear how many TA positions will be available—there may be more than the department currently knows about.
- Some programs have lost positions, including American Studies, Sociology, and others, but English, Anthropology, Poly-Sci and History maintaining numbers.

Officer Reports—

Colloquium: Lorelei Sterling

- Spring series went well—8 total presentations, evenly split between European and American history students. Professors present at most presentations, and one out of department student.
- The next representative should be someone willing to be proactive in getting people to present, as this year there were no ABD student presentations. This should be a goal for next year—wider involvement. Planning needs to start early.

GPSA: Nathan Roberts and Jennifer Reynolds

- Budget proposals for 0% and 5% increases for the next academic year—waiting to hear about legislation in Olympia

- Push to write state senators regarding the proposed statewide 30% tuition increase—caps have been removed, raise will be 15% over each of the next two years. Not sure yet how this will impact assistantships.
- New President: Jason McConnell, Poly-Sci. GPSA is now headed by Liberal Arts students, as opposed to Professional students.
- Proposal to collect demographic information on students for a website—voluntary census. Not clear how information will be protected or what problems might arise from this. Security issues must be dealt with before this project can proceed.
- Forced elections will be held for empty seats—History has the allotted number of representatives, so this will not affect our department.
- Revision of bylaws to take place Monday.
- Full time secretary just hired—only permanent employee of GPSA.
- Anticipating having to deal with lots of problems next year in relation to the imposed 5 hour maximum work week.
- Nathan has been put on the budget committee.

Masters Representative: Laura Arata

- Mentorship program went well this year, looking forward to more improvements next school year.
- Noted that Jen Brown requests a mentee
- Fields were much better matched this year
- Request to try and match students according to age as well if possible

Vancouver Representative: Aaron Welchel

- Barbara Travers successfully defended her D-1
- Adam has been approved for summer research in Ghana
- All three Vancouver students on course for teaching next year
- Vancouver constituency is advanced in programs, so not a lot for this position to do at the moment. There may be some new MA's next year.

PhD Representative: Torsten Homberger (presented by Lee Ann Hall)

- Concerns raised that the 540 European seminar course should be mandatory for all graduate students
- Some question as to 580 (Historiography) being offered in the Spring instead of the Fall as some professors expect students to know this information, but this issue has come up before, and most faculty feel students are not ready to take this course first semester. We could write a letter regarding this on behalf of students, but would likely not be well received.
- Grad Studies is most concerned with revamping the program and fields of study at the moment.

Graduate Studies Representative: Lee Ann Hall

- Program revisions: Track 1 and Track 2 will no longer be options, but fields are being reconfigured. Will look more like Track 2, but primary field will be a broader range of fields.
- Might give professors a chance to argue cases that they can teach a more specific field with a supporting field and a thematic/theoretical field (for example: 17th Century France → Early Modern Europe → Slavery etc.)
- The World program will probably be the least impacted, as it is already similarly structured.
- Grad Studies wants to start mentoring students in this new system
- Current students will have some flexibility to configure prelims and reading lists.

Graduate Faculty Representative: Jennifer Brown

- Endowed Chair funding pulled by donors and given to Vet Med, but the University is covering the salary amount
- The position will now be called either the Palouse Chair, Columbia Chair, or Evergreen Chair.
- Reasoning given by donors for pulling funding was that Dr. Boag's research was too narrow in scope and a bigger name was wanted.
- A B.A. degree in history at the Vancouver campus was approved
- Changes to the undergraduate curriculum are coming—still assessing the program.
- Dr. Heather Streets is the new director of the General Education program.
- GenEd is in a “holding pattern” for this year, no broad sweeping changes to be made.
- Class sizes raised to 165, but assignments are to be more standardized.
- DDP courses will be changing—more graduate students teaching.
- Discussions for some increased collaboration with the U of I to allow students there to take classes at WSU and vice-versa.

Summer Matters and HGSA Newsletter—

- Drafts for the newsletter need to be to Laura by July 1st
- Laura will organize and put together the final copy
- Laura will send out an email reminder on this, along with a copy of last year's newsletter
- Ideas for the back page: Wiley Exposition, Digital Archives, Field School, etc.
- Mentors / Mentees to be assigned during the summer—Laura and Torsten are responsible for this.

Meeting adjourned, 3:05 pm.

LJA