

Graduate College Council Meeting - December 9, 2024
<https://udel.zoom.us/j/93206670835>

- a. Vote on [previous meeting minutes](#)
 - i. Approved with no dissent noted.
- b. Dean's Report
 - i. Graduate Newsletter. Biweekly. High open-rate. Discussions about how to increase readership. Only mentioned at orientation. Based on feedback from GSG, there's support for efforts to raise awareness about this communication channel.
 - ii. On Friday, 12/13, there will be a Fac Sen open hearing, sharing the vision and functioning of the Grad College, and taking questions. GCC members are encouraged to please attend. Note that the newly-revised Grad College bylaws will soon be conveyed to Fac Sen.
- c. Graduate Student's Report
 - i. The Graduate Caucus met recently. Many members put in their names for committees for the spring.
 - ii. The Graduate Caucus is working to revise its constitution and bylaws, through amendments to be voted on next week.
 - iii. A [report](#) was recently produced by the Transportation Committee about bus routes. Steps to make bus service more accessible in the spring are recommended and requested.
- d. Populate [Committees](#); [Committee appointments](#) (viewing only)
 - i. Needs as of this 12/9/2024 meeting:
 - 1. Grad student on Awards
 - 2. Two faculty on COI cmte
 - 3. One faculty on parental leave
 - 4. One faculty on thesis and dissertation formatting
 - 5. Two faculty on faculty/student relations
- e. Discuss Vacation Leave Policy and Survey
 - i. Goals: See how this policy is working and measure awareness
 - ii. Comments/issues/questions/considerations:

1. If student funding is split between projects, how is leave allocated?
2. Often this policy is not formalized within units, applied informally.
3. At what scale should vacation be approved? (Not at the Grad College level)
4. Webform for students to request this?-- how to keep track
5. Policy as written is only for 12 month contracts. What about students on 9 month contracts? (Even students usually on 12m contracts usually have 9 months for the last year)
6. Pros/cons of a combined faculty+student survey vs separate surveys for the two groups of respondents.
7. TA contracts have forced vacation, outside of term-time, while GA contracts do not. What's equitable?

f. Discuss Graduate Student Bill of Rights

- i. There was extensive discussion about a Graduate Student Bill of Rights. GSG has begun working on this. No particular action steps were envisioned for this GCC meeting; rather, there is a plan to ramp up to work on this in the spring and the current meeting was intended as an opportunity to brainstorm and raise considerations.
- ii. The [COE's Graduate Student Bill of Rights](#) was described.
- iii. These questions/comments/considerations were raised, sometimes with responses from leadership:
 1. Should a BoR articulate rights regardless of whether processes exist to guarantee and protect those rights?
 2. How does this relate to prior student requests for an Ombuds position, which has been repeatedly rejected?
 3. There is so much variation across colleges. What is the role of the Graduate College in this? Some candidate answers:
 - a. Establish a floor, which other Colleges could add to.

- b. Articulate a model or aspirational document, which other colleges can use as a template.
 - c. The Grad College BoR would presumably cover the students in interdisciplinary programs administered by the Grad College.
 - 4. How does this relate to the possibility of graduate student unionization?
 - a. Leadership indicated that this can be a Both/And.
 - iv. What if a student is subject to both the GC's BoR and one in their college? That would be confusing to the extent they disagree.
 - v. What if BoR's need to be regularly updated?
 - vi. Would the BoR largely be a re-articulation of existing policy? Adding documents doesn't always enhance rights, if new documents distract attention.
 - vii. Who would approve this? Senate, President?
 - 1. Different perspectives were shared. The GCC, the FacSen, and/or GSG would want to pass this. GSG is working on draft text. A collaborative effort is envisioned.
 - g. Announcements: Request for reviewers
 - i. This is Doctoral Fellowship Nomination Time. LaRuth McAfee will be looking for reviewers. Enthusiasm was aired: the nominations are lovely.
 - h. Next meeting in February.