

GPC Meeting Minutes

Chaired by Mike Fuerstman (fuerstm@fas) & Melissa Grachan (grachan@fas)

April 11, 2006

Budget

In order to ease record keeping, prior to any GPC sponsored event a "GPC Activity Request Form" must be filled out and signed by either a GPC Chair or Treasurer. When filing for reimbursement, the form should be submitted to Anneka along with any receipts. This form can be found on the GPC page located on the department website or in the main office.

New Co-chair needed

Melissa has served the GPC for over one year and will be stepping down. A volunteer is needed to server as a new Co-chair. In general, responsibilities include planning and scheduling speakers (career, student, academic, etc.) as well as overseeing events handled by other volunteers. Please let either Mike or Melissa know if you are interested. Volunteers for the positions of Secretary and Treasurer will also be needed within the next few months.

Proposed Class List

At the request of Prof. Friend, a general list of what students consider "required" courses was compiled. Due to the number of courses and the specialization of some of them, it was suggested that in some cases the courses could be offered on alternate years. The professor teaching the course need not be from the department; in some cases similar courses are offered by MCB and the Med School. The following courses were suggested.

Chemical Biology: Enzymology/Kinetics
Bioorganic chemistry, including biosynthesis
Structural biology
Bioinorganic chemistry

Physical Chemistry: Statistical Mechanics, graduate level
Quantum mechanics
Quantum chemistry
Gas phase kinetics
Materials science
Biophysics
Physical inorganic chemistry, including group theory

Organic Chemistry: Organometallic chemistry
Advanced spectroscopy

Melissa will be compiling this information and passing it along to Prof. Friend.

GSC Curriculum Planning Committee

Prof. John Huchra, Vice Provost for Research Policy and head of UPCSE (University Planning Committee on Science and Engineering), would like a volunteer from the department to

assist in discussions about the future direction of the science and engineering programs at Harvard. Meeting times and their duration have not been determined. Please contact Melissa if you are interested.

Seminars

Academic speakers: Prof. Graham Fleming from UC Berkeley, May 10 @ 4:15. Buffet to follow.

Student colloquia: Upcoming speakers include Robin Friedman, Mike Fuerstman, Catherine Leimkuhler, Mary Rozenman, and Jason St. Clair. These events will be scheduled in the near future.

Career speakers: Ernie Chang formerly a postdoc at Biogen. Catherine will schedule for near future.
Jorge Goldstein, patent attorney at Kessler Goldstein Fox, '76 Westheimer.
Mary will contact and schedule for this summer.
Victoria Halle, founder and CEO of OneWorld Health Institute (first Nonprofit pharma). Melissa will contact and schedule.

Summer Happy Hours

Karen Ruff will be the primary organizer of these events this year. They will likely be along the same format as last year: 10-12 events taking place at 5 pm on Fridays. Due to the construction in the chemistry courtyards, the location of the events is not yet determined. The remaining half of the courtyard and the Bauer courtyard are being considered as possible locations. We are soliciting comments to improve these events.

G4 GAC Survey

Responses were received from 12 out of 43 members of the G4 class. In general, the respondents were able to have their top faculty choices serve on their committee and felt that their progress towards completion of the Ph.D. degree was adequately addressed. Problems and concerns centered on scheduling and the meeting format. Students that delayed in scheduling their GAC meeting encountered difficulties; additional reminders to do so or instituting a deadline for scheduling the GAC meeting may resolve this issue.

Many students were uncomfortable and surprised by the request that they leave the room and allow the professors to discuss them alone at the start of the GAC meeting. This section gave the perception that the objectivity and differing viewpoints of the committee members may be compromised or that the committee members may neglect reading the submitted information in favor of simply being brought up to speed by the student's advisor. Moving this private discussion to the middle or end of the meeting would address these concerns.