GSA Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, September 6th, 2007  
5:00 PM  
Wittson Hall 3037

Members Present: Mario Fernandez, James Randazzo, Carmen Brindeiro, Mike Gleason, Brianna Ormsbee, Katie Chapman, Brad Creamer, Paula Richards, Christine Ross, Heidi Johnson, Tara Nordgren, Jessica Hutter, Haley Capek, Austin Jelcick, Saili Moghe, and Agnes Constantino.

Approval of minutes from August Meeting

Old Business: Fall BBQ
- Was on budget
- 113 people signed in, a great turnout

GSA Brochure
- James put together this year’s brochure.
- We will try to spruce up for next year, and to place them in the new student orientation packet
- A suggestion was made to print them at Kinko’s

New Business: Emergency System Update
- Every student is encouraged to sign up through Blackboard
- Currently only 1,000 students have signed up
- The goal was to get as many of the 7,000 students we have signed up

Midtown Omaha Parade
- Bill Oneil from Public Affairs is looking for student volunteers
- Graduate students, not necessarily GSA members, are encouraged to show off the diversity of UNMC students at the 100 Anniversary of the Midtown Omaha Parade on October 6th, 2007 from 3 pm till finish
- Contact Mario Fernandez if you’re interested

Reassignment/Formation of Committees
- Academic Affairs Committee will be split to work on the webpage and the pre-matriculation site. The webpage group will try to update the incoming survival guide for students, with a special emphasis on international students. The pre-matriculation site group will wrap things up for the unofficial guide for students as well as emphasize the BRTP course tips.
- Career Development Committee will focus on workshops and seminars
- Social Committee will help plan events as well as assist with seminars
- A new committee will be formed to deal with the GSA blog. Austin volunteered to be chair of this committee as well as to blog. New bloggers will be needed for this year.
- GSA constitution may have to be changed if Student Senate ratifies the change in their constitution allowing a seat on the Senate for the GSA president.
- The Quality of Student Life Committee will focus their efforts on creating a functional student survey that can be given annually.
Upcoming Events:

- September 20th, Student Health Insurance Forum
  o Patti George will speak at noon in Wittson Hall 3010
- November 1st, Jorge Cham PHD comics
  o DRC 1002, Atrium reserved afterwards
  o Food served at 11:30, start seminar at noon
  o Mario will help setup itinerary
- Possible topics for seminars/workshops
  o Grant Writing for alternate years
  o Scientific writing, Grammar Hammer by Dr. Myron Taeves
  o NIH vs Academia
  o CDC talk
  o Translational Research
  o Integration of different research backgrounds to current job
  o International Relations
  o Opportunities for funding

Ideas for social Events

- Halloween Party
  o Rent out the basement of the Crescent Moon
  o Charge admission, less for those in costumes
- Continuing the tradition of a hayrack ride, only earlier in the year
- Bonfire, cookout only – no hayrack ride

Discussion: UNMC Fellowship/Assistantship Competition

- Mario is drafting a letter to the Graduate Council addressing the concerns and suggestions for the UNMC Fellowship/Assistantship Competition.
- This letter will contain the following comments/suggestions:
  o The fellowships should not be distributed to the departments to give out to the deserving students. The competition should stay in place.
  o GSA agrees that the application should be increased to 7 pages, with the condition that it be used for preliminary data.
  o GSA strongly disagrees with obtaining external reviewers for the cost of one or two fellowships and has concerns over confidentiality.
  o Students should be able to include a name of a suggested reviewer for a study section that is outside of their Supervisory committee
  o Study sections should be kept, increased, and the more detail about what the study section will review should be given.
  o 1st year students will not be removed from the competition, but will be thrown in with everyone else, but with slightly different scoring
  o The Letter of Recommendation will not count towards the score, only to justify the productivity of the student
  o Second to fourth year students should be graded 70% on the proposal, 20% on productivity, and 10% on grades. First year students will be graded by 70% proposal, 20% grades, and 10 % productivity (measured by their preliminary data).
  o Productivity of the senior students will be measured by publications, abstracts, and participation at meetings attended.
Submitted by,

James Randazzo