

2.10.14, 3:00pm

Attendance: Danielle, Tyler, Paige, Colleen, Maria, Emily, Sarah, Jen

Better times for meetings?

- Move away from Fridays because there is so much else going on
- Request general feedback regarding scheduling

Constitution: Paige will email out the original

RSGA: Who are we and why do we exist

- Originally to capture funding opportunities at the university level
- Separate from the GSA
- Localized organization at the department level to have a cohesive presence and formally act on the kinds of things we presently are undertaking such as conference, brownbag series, etc
- Expand and grow: connect with the GSA and community service, etc

GSA

- How to get on their email list as individuals
  - Jen emailed the GSA to ask
- Seats open in the general assembly; meetings Wed at 6:00 (dinner provided) every other week

Health insurance changes update

- Aetna changing their policies so cost will go up
- University response is to consider raising our premiums or increasing our out of pocket costs
- Not the first time this has been discussed. A few years ago, they proposed similar action and with help from professor Tim Slack, grad student response considered unionizing and actions were dropped.
  - Emily will contact Time Slack to see if he can provide information on how they were successful last time.
- GSA has filed a formal letter of complaint requesting that these changes not be made
- Voted unanimously to send a similar letter of complaint officially as an organization
- Danielle will draft a letter to use as a templates for students to send as individuals. She will provide this with information about where to send these letters, contact info for Karen Klein, the grad student contact in the health insurance office
- Spread the word! Very little transparency and most people do not know this is happening. Sense of urgency. Considering attending classes in the department to give out information, contact grad students in other departments
- Ann and Clare were unaware of proposed changes, see if faculty would be interested in sending letters

Website

- New RSGA website! <http://www.clubs.psu.edu/up/rsga/>

- Proposed content:
  - Conference info
  - Advice to new students/the "what I wish I knew" guide
  - Meeting times and past minutes
  - Events and calendar information for brown bags or socials
- What else would you like to see?

Cynthia Duncan visit/talk, possibly getting a lunch/network set up for April 8th or 9th

Comprehensive exam process update: They still have our concerns, and they are planning to make bigger program changes over the next few years regarding comps, qualifiers, and course requirements. We will be grandfathered in at this point.

Information on upcoming research events:

- RSS Abstracts Due Date: March 3<sup>rd</sup> (Equity, Democracy, and the Commons: Counter-narratives for Rural Transformation)
- AFHVS Abstracts Due Date: February 1<sup>st</sup> (Collaboration and Innovation Across the Food System)
- PSU Graduate Student Exhibition: Apply by February 17<sup>th</sup>
- CAS Research Expo: Abstracts by February 21<sup>st</sup>

Request for brown bag on preparing poster presentations