

# **FSGA Face-to-Face Informal Meeting**

APS “April” Meeting 2010

Saturday, February 13, 2010

## **Attendance:**

Sarah Caudill, Megan Comins, Elena Long, Ben Olsen, Amber Stuver

## **Action Items:**

- Amber, forward graduate student bill of rights.
- Elena, followup on LGBT survey and petition.
- Mike, any followup on TA survey?
- Sarah, look into updating FGSA website.
- Everyone, discussion needed on what to do with funds. Ben, possible organization of subcommittee to help with this?
- Megan, Sarah, Randa, organization of FGSA/FIP cosponsored session. Also, followup on issues discussed in FIP luncheon.
- Set up teleconferences for executive committee meetings.
- Advertise FEd newsletter’s “Graduate Student corner”

## **Agenda:**

1. Introductions; new executive committee members; new member ideas
2. “Bill of Rights” for graduate students
3. Proposal for adding graduate students to executive committees
4. TA survey and beyond
5. Our co-sponsored sessions
6. FIP luncheon
7. Our budget surplus and what to do with it
8. Any other ideas

## **Minutes:**

### **1. Introductions; new executive committee members**

Sarah Caudill, Chair (continuing)

Megan Comins, Chair-Elect (new)

Kendall Mahn, Past Chair (continuing)

Michael Walock, Secretary (continuing)

Eric Sorte, Treasurer (new)

Randa Asa’d, International Student Affairs Officer (new)

Amber Stuver, Councillor (continuing)

Elena Long, Member-at-Large (new)

Kimberly Boddy, Member-at-Large (new)

Ben Olsen, Member-at-Large (continuing)  
Sidd Shenoy, Member-at-Large (continuing)

## 2. “Bill of Rights” for graduate students

- Amber Stuver will soon forward a graduate student “Bill of Rights” that she drafted. The committee needs to:
  - make comments on it.
  - contact SPS to reach out to undergrads; we want to encourage them to check medical leave, maternity, etc. policies for graduate schools they are considering.
- “Bill of Rights” has already received support from other groups within APS:
  - Forum on International Physics
  - Committee on International Freedom of Scientists  
<http://www.aps.org/about/governance/committees/cifs/index.cfm>

## 3. Proposal for adding graduate students to executive committees

Student members constitute 26% of total membership of APS. FGSA has 8.5% of total membership of APS. Thus, graduate students make up a non-negligible part of total membership. The graduate student perspective is an important and necessary perspective for any executive committee in APS. Thus, FGSA supports adding a voting student member to executive committees.

- Result: The Group on Gravitation announced on Feb. 15 during their business meeting that they voted to elect two voting student members to their executive committee.
  - Sarah Caudill attended the business meeting to thank GGR and in particular, Stan Whitcomb, the past-chair.
  - GGR will set the precedent for adding student members by amending their by-laws.
  - Hopefully, other groups and forums will follow suit.

## 4. TA survey and beyond

TA survey was a great success. Results will be presented; Mike Wallock’s wife gets credit for the statistical analysis done for the TA survey. Will there be a followup survey?

- Other possible surveys:
  - Elena Long noted that the membership for FGSA included  $\sim 3000$  men,  $\sim 850$  women, and  $\sim 230$  not given. Of these, how many couldn’t put down their gender given binary options? A LGBT survey could be used to gauge where things could be changed.

- \* Ohio State might be able to help (they have an OSTEM chapter).
- \* Talk with social scientists for ideas and help?
- \* Ultimately, we would like to change the APS membership registration forms to account for genders that don't fall into the binary M/F schema.

## 5. Our co-sponsored sessions

FGSA can organize one session a meeting (March and April) or co-sponsor two each meeting. We already have a request from FIP to co-sponsor a session. See 6. FIP luncheon below.

## 6. FIP luncheon

Ivelisse Cabrera and Sarah Caudill were invited to attend the Forum on International Physics luncheon on Feb 13 at the April meeting. Many ideas were shared:

- FGSA should continue co-sponsored sessions with FIP for the next March/ April Meeting.
  - Proposed topic: “Experiences and Issues for Young Physicists in the International Arena: Impact on the Future of Physics.”
- FGSA should consider providing funding to graduate students to attend exchange programs.
  - This is expansion of the idea to provide funding to graduate students to attend workshops, conferences, summer schools, seminars, etc.
  - There are currently some exchange programs in place at some institutions outside of the US that we could use as resources, including:
    - \* Training and Research in Italian Labs (TRIL):  
<http://www.ictp.it/pages/education/tril.html>
    - \* International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA):  
<http://www.iaea.org/About/Jobs/internships.html>
    - \* Japanese Government
    - \* Institutions in Brazil and Argentina
  - Starting point: search for all available internships, scholarships, fellowships available for graduate students and add a link in our FGSA website. This information can be collected by searching online, but also through APS Office of International Affairs (or through FIP).
  - FIP contacts who provided business cards for followup on the issue of exchange programs:
    - \* Carlos Ordoez, Ph.D  
Associate Professor  
Department of Physics, University of Houston

Adviser to the Director for International Scientific Cooperation  
The Abdus Salam  
International Centre for Theoretical Physics  
Tel: (713) 743-3586  
E-mail: ordonez@uh.edu

\* Prof. Dr. Mamoru Fujiwara  
Research Center for Nuclear Physics  
Osaka University  
Tel: 06 6879 8914  
E-mail: fujiwara@rcnp.osaka-u.ac.jp

- FGSA should communicate with the Committee on International Scientific Affairs (CISA); this is a relatively new committee from APS. More info on this committee can be found in the back issue of APS News (last edition). Website is here: <http://www.aps.org/about/governance/committees/cisa/index.cfm>

## 7. Our budget surplus and what to do with it

The Accounting Department mentioned (in a larger conversation about all unit finances) that FGSA has \$65K and only spent \$570 during 2009. With the current dues reimbursement scheme for Forums, FGSA receives between \$15 - 17K each year. How should we spend the money? Some ideas:

- Subsidize costs for committee members to meet or attend meetings, convocation, etc.
- Help provide funding for graduate student travel.
  - \$500 mini-grants?
  - Fixed-amount grant, tiered for North American vs. international students, with an application that would include an essay and a letter of support; international travel is inherently more expensive and warrants a larger grant.
  - CAM scholarship for fixed amount?
  - Cover costs for student speakers invited to FGSA sessions, especially from under-developed countries. Or 1-2 nights in a hotel and air fare?
- Trish Lettieri, “I’d also like to get feedback on FGSA helping to support the Student Reception at the March Meeting. The Membership Department has covered that cost since FGSA formed, with the thinking that once the Forum became financially stable that there could be shared expenses. We typically spend about \$10K on the event which covers food and drink tickets. Let me know if you think it would be reasonable to split the expenses or just a flat \$5K amount for future years. The 2010 reception is already in my budget but I would not object if FGSA wanted to contribute.”

- Help with development of international student exchange programs through APS (see 6. FIP luncheon above).

We also need to consider how we should choose recipients of the funding. One idea is to set up a subcommittee for grant applications. Ben Olsen has expressed interest in overseeing this. We will need to set up a vote to decide what we should do.

## 8. Any other ideas

1. Forum on Education Newsletter - This newsletter is published three times a year and contains a “Graduate Student Corner.” We need to:
  - circulate these newsletters around to the FGSA membership.
  - solicit articles for the Graduate Student Corner from FGSA members via email.
2. Petition for LGBT+ Forum similar to CSWP and COM - Elena Long has volunteered to look into this in addition to the survey mentioned in 4. TA survey and beyond. We will likely need about 200 signatures. Also, AAS has a precedent for a group like this already; could be helpful.
3. FGSA website - Our website needs to be updated. Sarah Connors is the person we need to talk to about this. Some things we need to think about:
  - Should we post an online newsletter?
  - Adding a list of past executive committee members for CV purposes. Sarah Caudill has volunteered to look into this.
  - Should we put a board for comments and lists of useful websites? This ties into the information we could post about student exchange programs.
4. FGSA executive committee meetings - Should we try to setup monthly(?) teleconferences for executive committee members? Or maybe a message board for the executive committee? EVO is a possibility. Also, APS has provided lines in the past.