

GSO Meeting Agenda & Meeting Notes

17:00, Tuesday, April 7, 2020

Zoom

Time	Item	Notes
17:05	Welcome (President - Khadija El Karfi)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reminder about the proxy system<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. If you cannot attend the meeting and cannot find anyone in your department to take your place, please email our Vice President – Shannon Bewley (sbewley@bu.edu) who acts as our proxy2. Reminder about the rep mailing list:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. People can subscribe/unsubscribe from the rep list here: http://www.bu.edu/gso/join-our-mailing-list/ <p>Ensure that your department is represented if you are incoming or outgoing!</p>
17:15	Q&A with Dean Barman	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Q&A with Dean Barman<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Summer funding for 8-month stipends:<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. GRS already providing students with 8-month summer stipend in terms of how to help people in crisis<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Currently identifying students who will need emergency funding roughly \$4-5,000 and then finding that money → difficult to make this a long-term reality however2. Ask for \$8,000 is not feasible, they think, and will also cause inequities between 8 and 12-month stipend studentsii. This can't happen every summer because the 2 sources of funding will be depleted by the end of the summer—student and faculty travel funds<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. They're also coming from gift accounts and it depends on the availability of those gift funds → not feasible to provide summer funding every year, not sustainableb. COVID-19 has stopped research, GRS has asked for how many students have needed to halt research as a result; need to see the results before they make any decisions about extending 5-year funding along with time to degree<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. 60% of GRS students are funded through faculty federally-funded research grants so it depends on

		<p>the next stimulus package → Provost-level decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. These decisions aren't going to be made anytime soon c. Childcare → does any university provide childcare assistance? d. Healthcare: out of her paygrade, if there's been issues with covering COVID-related expenses, let her know and she can advocate e. Why do some students have 12-month and others have 8-month funding packages? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Doesn't particularly understand the distinction ii. Recent decision to move to 5-year funding worked well for federally-funded grants that operate on 12-month iii. The university could only afford 8-month stipends for humanities and social sciences and this has been difficult to change → would require \$1.8 million shift to fund all students on 12-month stipend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Depts would need to decrease enrollment or go through every other year enrollment 2. University is unwilling to provide the \$1.8 million f. International student issues as BU <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Has brought to associate Provost's office ii. These are changes that need to be changed at university level g. Finding money and raising money <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. BU has raised a significant endowment lately but we're still low in relation to other similar-level universities ii. \$1.1 billion they raised was largely earmarked iii. Discussing graduate student-focused fundraising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most of the money is coming from undergrad alums and want them to have particular targets h. COVID task forces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. 1 about 5-year funding: goal is to try to figure out if the university can afford to extend graduate student funding packages, trying to find an effective and convincing strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Would grad students be effectively using their time here? ii. Barman and her staff working with different depts about their needs and institutional funding iii. Aside from that there aren't other task forces i. How are decisions being made for funding
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. People whose research has been held up j. Because Mugar is closed it's impossible to prepare for qualifying exams. Is this part of the understood ways that research has been halted? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Survey sent out to all faculty describing the need; assumption that advisors will know how to estimate your progress k. What's the delay in understanding 8-month stipend students' aid? For <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Pardee not telling people they have summer funding until early May is unacceptable to Dean Barman ii. Needing to pinpoint sources of institutional funding that people would be taking advantage of before they decide who and how much people get for summer aid l. How does BU account for the potential for 12-month stipend students taking 8-month students' institutional funding, like internships, TF etc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. There haven't been any systematic ways of addressing this m. Are part-time PhD students going to be eligible for summer aid as well? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Still consider everyone to be full-time if they accept the 5-year full-time funding status n. Primary commitment is for students in year 1-5 and students who are 6+ years will be deprioritized o. Another way to express concerns is to reach out to Sarah Hokansen (sch1@bu.edu) who will then <u>communicate your concerns with anonymity</u>
17:45	Update on Travel Grant Deadline - Alex Yen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spring GSO application cycle deadline pushed back to May 15th, 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Contact information: Alex Yen gso.travel.grants@gmail.com b. Apply if you're potentially looking to travel for research or conferences c. If you've been granted a travel grant and you have unrefunded fees associated with that conference, you should email Alex at the email above with receipts that you could not get these things reimbursed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. <u>Remember</u>: everyone has a full year to utilize Travel Grant. So you could use these funds for a different conference if you email Alex with these details. ii. <u>Examples of proof</u>: email from conference organizers, highlighting line from ticket receipt that it's non-refundable etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. airline credit is a grey area so email Alex

		<p>d. If you have a conference that now happens beyond the fiscal year of when you received the Grant, contact Alex because this is still a discussion due to extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>2. MA Statehouse Advocacy Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. April 15th Advocacy trip canceled b. Another form of organized advocacy will take place on April 15th c. If interested, email: gsc-eab-state@mit.edu <p>3. Poll results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Most people expressed an interest in the Graduate Student Tax Workshop b. The E-board is currently working on finding professionals to lead this workshop c. Working to find a firm that can provide a recorded webinar to post online that will go through both federal and Massachusetts income taxes for both US citizens and international students
17:50	Treasurer's report - James Aglio	<p>1. GSO Uncommitted Funds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Because extraordinary circumstances we won't negatively impact our future funding if we have significant funding left over <p>2. Update on the possibility of reallocating remaining funds</p> <p>3. Other comments:</p>
17:55		<p>1. Exciting Announcements - upcoming defenses, families, other events</p> <p>2. Any other opening comments from outside groups etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frankie Vanaria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BU letter for grad students has been circulating - If you still have questions about what's going on for grad students at BU, you can reach out to Frankie (francisv@bu.edu) - Further questions about summer aid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any students who have outside funding are not eligible for any BU summer aid - How are other departments communicating with you? English department has been very quiet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - History of AA has been communicative, weekly - Romance studies also having communication - Other depts have been far less transparent - Very few answers but solidarity within the department