

University of California, Los Angeles Graduate Student Association Forum #4, Winter Quarter, Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 5:30pm

Forum minutes taken by Elyse Brusher, GSA Director of Administrative Affairs

Week 3 Winter 2021 Agenda

***Items to vote**

5:30-5:35 Call to Order/Welcome Address

Musibau Francis Jimoh (GSA VP of Internal Affairs)

5:35-5:45 Updates from GSA Leadership

JP Santos (GSA President)

5:45-6:10 Forum Engagement

John Bollard (COO/CFO Ashe Center)

6:10-6:40 Forum Engagement

Michael Beck (Administrative Vice Chancellor)

6:40-7:05 GSRC and GWC overview and utilization

Marilyn Gray (Director of the GWC) and Sarah Valdovinos (Assistant Director of the GSRC)

7:05-7:13 Amendment to GSA Elections Code 6.7.1 and approval of GSA Elections Calendar 20/21*

Akash Deep Singh (GSA Elections Commissioner)

7:13-7:20 Recognizing ELTS as a single department in the Humanities Council*

Yasmine Krings (Humanities Council GSA Forum Representative)

7:20-7:30 Changing the University of California Graduate and Professional Students Council organization status*

Conner Philson (GSA Director of Community Partnerships)

7:30 Adjournment

Musibau Francis Jimoh

LETTING PEOPLE INTO THE MEETING--5:30

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME ADDRESS--5:35pm

Musibau Francis Jimoh (GSA Vice President of Internal Affairs)

It is good to see everyone and today we are especially thankful for a successful and peaceful transition of power. Before we go any further I want to make sure I have your permission to start recording as well as to remind everyone who the voting members are (representatives from the academic student councils). We have three items up for a vote today.

UPDATES FROM GSA LEADERSHIP--5:35

JP Santos (GSA President)

- I am working to increase accessibility and awareness of resources for graduate students through:
 - Create an infographic with information about graduate and professional student resources that are based on student needs and questions.
 - Goal is to finish the infographic by the end of this quarter
 - Departments will post these resources on their websites, hopefully to help students navigate resources on campus
 - Hosting a Presidential Town Hall with VC Gordon, VC Beck, and Dean Ettner on Feb 4th around lunchtime
 - It's not about COVID but more about campus resources like CAPS
 - Sign up to attend via the [registration link](#)
 - We will post FAQs from this meeting on the GSA Facebook page
 - Comment from Susan Ettner: You're always welcome to ask me questions, but please don't be offended if I refer you to the relevant unit for the answer if it's not us. Besides Student Affairs, the Graduate Division's purview also often gets confused with that of the Graduate Council (they make policy, we implement).
- Continuing with GSA Resolutions
 - The Resolution for equity in graduate student services is moving forward

On behalf of Letty: (GSA VP of Academic Affairs):

- [Sign up for the GSA newsletter](#) to stay informed about GSA projects and operations

FORUM ENGAGEMENT--5:45

John Bollard (COO/CFO Ashe Center)

jbollard@ashe.ucla.edu

- Campus commitment to testing

- Identifying people who are spreading COVID and do not know it
- Contact tracing and isolating people as necessary
- Three brick and mortar test sites in addition to a bus (largely devoted to graduate students)
- Anyone living, learning, or working on campus is required to get tested 2x per week
- Graduate students living in university housing are required to get tested once every two weeks if they are not coming to campus
- Confirmed campus cases (1837 on campus)
 - Spike after the break
 - Testing by location (5200 people per day tested on Tuesday, January 20th)
 - Positivity by cohort from last week
 - 26% positivity rate for students involved in Greek life
 - These are students who are Greek affiliated and not necessarily living in the fraternity and sorority houses on campus, but off campus in non-university housing. Because of this, we cannot force them to get tested or isolate.
 - Relatively low positivity rate in general
- Vaccine Priority
 - We are at the tail end of phase 1A (healthcare workers, COVID test center workers, etc.)
 - Soon moving into phase 1B (ResLife, Housing Custodial Staff, employees over 65, pre-K teachers and staff, research faculty, staff, **graduate students** who are part of research ramp up, other on-site employees)
 - All students will be vaccinated in phase 2
 - Broad vaccination available to the general public will likely begin in April or May
 - Hard to get the necessary supply of vaccines
 - Ackerman Ballroom will be converted into a vaccination hub for the campus
 - Ashe will provide vaccines (two doses, no cost to students)
 - The order in which students are vaccinated may be determined by randomization (those with comorbidities will be vaccinated sooner) or through the social vulnerability index (based on zip codes and geared toward addressing historic unequal access to healthcare)

Question from Jacob: What counts as a student employee? Would readers or GSRs be eligible for that phase?

Response: Yes, if you have an employment position (GSR, TA, etc.) you will be included in phase 1B and will be reached out to soon for vaccination.

Question: Are there certain types of allergies that could make it risky to get the vaccine?

Response: It depends on the kind of allergies. Talk to your healthcare provider about whether or not you might be at risk of having a more severe allergic reaction to the vaccine and how to handle that.

Question from Alex: What should students who are out of state do to get the vaccine?

Response: It depends on what campus will do with opening in the fall (Will we vaccinate students upon their return to campus or while they are away?) If you get the vaccine while you are away from campus, you will need a referral from Ashe (if you have UCship). We can vaccinate you in the fall, but cannot require it because of the vaccine's Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) (this could change though) through the FDA. It may be required at some point for undergraduate students living in university housing.

Follow up from Alex: So just to sum up, students should contact their primary care physician for a referral, correct?

Response: It is too early for that now unless you have underlying health issues, but once we get to that phase and begin vaccinating students more broadly (we are probably about two months away from this), then yes.

Question from Amira: Will the fact that the vaccine comes at no cost to students be subject to change?

Response: No, the government is paying for it, so you should be covered. If it becomes an annual vaccine like the flu shot, then this status might change.

Follow up from Amira: And in terms of our age group, is there a date by which we will be vaccinated?

Response: If you are over 65, you are next. Encourage those folks to get in touch with their primary care providers. For the rest of you, it will probably be about two months before we are able to get you vaccinated, but this new administration may be able to make this happen sooner.

Question Akash: Does Ashe have a recommendation for a specific number of people that need to be vaccinated before campus activities can resume?

Response: That is a great question for VC Beck when he does his presentation.

Question from Karen: Who is the “we” that will be vaccinated by April/May? Students? The nation?

Response: Employees are part of the 1B phase that we are moving into now, so you, Karen, will be on the list and be contacted in the next few weeks because you are a UCLA employee. This 1B group also includes student employees such as TAs. Students who do not work for the university will have to wait until phase 2 (i.e April/May).

Question from Elyse: When we say that students will be vaccinated by April/May is that the first or second does?

Response: We are hoping that the 1st dose will be administered by April/May and the second will shortly follow.

Question from Akash: Is there anything we should be doing before getting the second dose of the vaccine?

Response: No, but you should be aware that most side effects come after the second dose. These are things such as pain at the injection site.

Question from Amira: What do you recommend for us to do to help encourage people to get the vaccine and educate them about it?

Response: Getting the word out is really important. Anything GSA can do to try to get through falsehoods would be very helpful.

Francis: We have a few minutes left before the next segment, so I will offer this time to JP to give us updates on the budget.

JP: We are planning to pass the budget with surplus assumptions during the week 6 GSA Forum meeting. The money you did not spend last year will be carried over, and a lot of councils did not spend their money last year because of the pandemic, so you will see this in the carryover.

During the week 6 meeting, we should also have a discussion about creative ways to spend money.

FORUM ENGAGEMENT--6:15

Michael Beck (UCLA Administrative Vice Chancellor)

- Housing projects
 - We recently acquired the Boulevard Apartments (on Santa Monica Blvd)
 - 337 units→ priority is medical residents and graduate students
 - There is a Target in the basement
 - Keystone, Mentone and Rosetone renovations
 - Improvements in security in response to package and bicycle thefts
- Farmer's market
 - Trying to get food to students for below market prices. Some of these activities have been impeded by the pandemic.
 - The next one is next week.
 - We are trying to ensure contactless pick up for students right now.
- BruinGo Transit pass
 - Unlimited rides on major bus companies in Westwood: Big Blue Bus (Route 17 now goes through Weyburn Ter.), Culver City Bus, Metro Bus, and Rail
 - Works with commuter lines as well (Antelope Valley, Santa Clarita, Long Beach Transit, etc.)
 - The Macgowan Turnaround will also be added to the Big Blue Bus route for the convenience of students going to North Campus
 - You can pick up your pass at the Central Ticketing Office
- Sepulveda Pass Transit Corridor Project
 - Rail project that would connect Sherman Oaks to LAX (there would be a stop at UCLA)
 - The project will hopefully be completed by 2028, but this is optimistic.
- Body cameras for campus police
 - Implemented this past year, and considered as best practices in policing. It is a very useful tool to create police accountability and help settle disputes about incidents.
 - Limitation: it only captures what it can see and it does not show everything.
 - Patrol officers and sergeants wear them and they are integrated with the in-car video→ cameras automatically get turned on when the car's sirens are turned on
 - Officers have no ability to edit or delete footage
- Spring Break Travel

- We are discouraging travel and encouraging isolation and testing for students who travel
- There is currently a quarantine in place for travel outside of the Southern California area (may be lifted by then)
- Would vaccinated individuals be exempt from the quarantine? Unclear for now.
- Future course scheduling
 - Virtually everything will be remote in Spring 2021
 - There may be more in person components at the graduate level in the Spring, especially in labs (classes that make use of specialized equipment/facilities)
- Summer 2021:
 - We have not made a final decision, but it will likely be mostly remote
- Fall 2021:
 - Mostly in-person but with face coverings and other mitigation measures
 - Some larger lectures may still be remote
 - We are anticipating have 75% occupancy in housing, but no triples
- I am also happy to answer questions about the COVID task force and vaccination efforts on campus.

Question from Akash: I will ask you the same question I asked John, does Ashe have a number of people that need to be vaccinated before campus activities can resume?

Response: The vaccine cannot be required but that could change before the fall. There is no specific number. We are following the guidance from LA County. Students will be vaccinated by the end of spring or early summer. We want to get them their two doses before they leave for other areas during the summer.

Question from JP: Firstly, I want to acknowledge everything you have been doing with the COVID task force. Secondly, I was wondering about requiring students to get vaccines and how that would work.

Response: Currently, we are not allowed to require it. If it were provided a regular FDA approval instead of the EUA, we may make it a requirement for students like the other immunizations they are required to get. This might not happen in time for the fall.

Question from JP: When they try to advocate for in-person classes on the department level they are told that it is up to the future planning task force, but it's really up to LA County. Would there be an openness to conduct a Town Hall addressing international student concerns related to this?

Response: It is an issue that tends to come full circle. We currently are not offering many courses in person, per LA County guidance. We understand that first year international students need to have a hybrid or in person class for their visa applications. Some universities are listing courses as hybrid (they are gambling that they can offer this). UCLA does not want to take the risk with students' visa applications being negatively affected if they cannot provide hybrid courses.

Response from Susan: The graduate courses currently approved for being in-person/hybrid have to meet the following criteria set forth by LA County DPH: Essential workforce sector; course is required (as in, it's listed as part of official program requirements); course is taken at the end of the program or if earlier, must be part of a "lockstep" program; course cannot be taught entirely online (meaning there is some resource that is essential to the course that can't be accessed online; it's unfortunately not enough just for the course to be better in person).

Question from Amira: What about students who are trying to come back to the U.S. after doing research abroad especially in terms of having gotten the vaccine? Will the vaccine be required for reentry?

Response: We have a much different administration leading the federal government that is more welcoming. Additionally, because of the EUA, we cannot require the vaccine right now, but that may change. To end on a more positive note, we are seeing a steep drop in hospitalized individuals in LA County, which indicates that we may be on the other side of that curve and that things may be improving.

GSRC AND GWC OVERVIEW AND UTILIZATION--6:51

Sarah Valdovinos (Assistant Director of the GSRC) and Marilyn Gray (Director of the GWC)

Marilyn Gray

mgray@saonet.ucla.edu

gwc@gsa.asucla.ucla.edu

- Writing appointments are available from graduate and professional students (and through one quarter after you graduate) through fees we pay to GSA (up to 50 min meetings)
 - You can bring in whatever you are working on that is not an exam
 - We take a collaborative approach with students
 - We give students feedback on argument, logic, etc.
 - You can sign up for appointments via handshake:
<https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/Appointments>
 - We hire students from across campus so that you can find a consultant in a similar field to your own

- We are currently conducting appointments via Skype
- Utilization
 - 2500-2800 appointments per year (800-1000 individuals)
 - Have added fellowship drop in appointments “professional development”
 - Post-appointment survey satisfaction ratings are strong
 - Let us know if there is a program or service you would like to see that we do not currently offer
- Workshops
 - Writing Grants and fellowships
 - Writing Theses & Dissertations
 - <https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/Workshops>
 - 40-50 workshop per year (600-800 attendees per year, 1000 last year)
- Thesis/Dissertation Support Programs
 - Master’s Thesis Mentoring Program
 - Dissertation Proposal/Prospectus Boot Camps (summer)
 - Thesis retreat for STEM fields (spring break and summer)
 - Online writing groups
- Fellowship & Grant-writing Support
 - Workshop video resources
 - Writing consultants who have received extramural fellowships
- Fellowship Archive
 - You can request access to this

Sarah Valdovinos (GSRC)

gsrc@saonet.ucla.edu

svaldovinos@saonet.ucla.edu

- First year grad and professional student programs
 - Orientation and EDI Days (new student portal on CCLE, 1100 students joined this year)
 - Open to all graduate students, many different types of sessions (mentorship, self-care, recognizing and reporting bias, social events, etc.)
 - <https://gsrc.ucla.edu/Equity-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Day>
 - <https://gsrc.ucla.edu/Orientation>
 - <https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/grad-orientation>
 - Departmental orientations
- Workshops, Events and Student Led Programming
 - <https://gsrc.ucla.edu/Calendar>
 - Focused on navigating different aspects of grad school → for all graduate students no matter what phase of their programs they are in
 - Student programming committee driving a lot of these programs forward
 - Research drop in hours
 - Graduate and professional student appreciation week
 - We put on a lot of collaborative events (working with departments and centers on campus)

- We are also a student report and referral center
 - We can help direct you to different resources
 - Have a lot of collaborations with GSA
- Graduate and Professional Student Support/Advocacy & Space
 - Physical space in SAC B11 when we campus is open
 - We have printing there, a lounge space, coffee, tea

Question Amira: Will these slides be made available to us after this meeting?

Response from Sarah: Yes, we will share those as well as the handouts we discussed.

Question JP: What is the best way to access GSRC and GWC?

Response from Sarah: You can go on our website (we have a strong online presence). You can also contact us via the email addresses listed above.

AMENDMENT TO GSA ELECTIONS CODE 6.7.1. AND APPROVAL OF GSA ELECTIONS CALENDAR 20/21*--7:05

Akash Deep Singh (GSA Elections Commissioner)

I actually have two items to bring to a vote. The first concerns the approval of the Elections Calendar:

1. Approval of Elections Calendar 2021

Election Application Available	Thursday, February 11 (2021)
Election Applications Due	Thursday, March 11 (2021)
Candidate and Campaign Orientation Meeting	Friday, March 12 (2021)
Elections Begin	Tuesday, April 06 (2021)
Elections End	Monday, April 12 (2021)
GSA Elections Board Meeting to certify results	Tuesday, April 13 (2021)

The second item concerns a reduction of the number of the number of signatures candidates for elected positions need in order to run from 50 to 25. Additionally, signatures would be gathered electronically through a Google doc, rather than in hard copy. These proposed changes aim to respond to challenges posed by the pandemic (the fact that we are remote right now).

RECOGNIZING ELTS AS A SINGLE DEPARTMENT IN THE HUMANITIES COUNCIL*--7:13

Yasmine Krings (Humanities Council GSA Forum Representative)

Over the summer, the departments of French & Francophone Studies, Italian Studies, German Studies, and Scandinavian Studies merged to form one department, called European Languages and Transcultural Studies (ELTS). Student Government and Accounting has been notified of this change and now we bring this issue to a vote at GSA Forum to modify the GSA codes to officially recognize ELTS as a single, unified department.

CHANGING THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS COUNCIL ORGANIZATION STATUS*--7:20

Conner Philson (Director of Community Partnerships)

- UC Graduate and Professional Council is like GSA across UC campus
- They are currently 501c4 nonprofit and want to change to a 501c3 nonprofit organization, which is for education related nonprofits. I am not sure of the history of why they were a 501c4 organization, but we have to vote on this
- Either way, it's tax deductible, but the 501c3 designation would give us more flexibility to operate closer to the UC students.

Francis: You can find the [supporting documents for these items here](#), if you need more information. I notice that we do not have quorum, so I propose that we table these items until the next meeting. Would anyone like to make a motion to this effect?

Motion to table these items until the next meeting: Shoshana Seidenfield (AAS) and Amira Hassnaoui (AAC)--Motion passes

Francis: **The councils who have delegates missing are: Engineering, Medicine, and Management.**

JP: Everyone, please encourage your colleagues to attend Forum Week 6 since we are also voting on the budget and we need quorum. We cannot vote on anything unless we achieve quorum.

ADJOURNMENT--7:30

Musibau Francis Jimoh

Francis: Thank you to everyone who participated in this meeting and a special thanks to our invited presenters, VC Beck, John Bollard, Sarah Valdovinos, and Marilyn Gray. We appreciate you! I will see you all for our next meeting on **Wednesday, February 10th at 5:30pm PT.**

Motion to Adjourn meeting: Amira Hassnaoui (AAC) and Alex Chubbick (BSC)--Motion passes