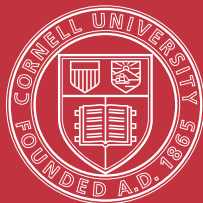# Graduate and Professional Community Initiative 2013

A Strategic Plan for the
Graduate and Professional Student Community

Prepared By:
The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
March 25, 2013

Cornell University

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Executive Summary

The Graduate and Professional Community Initiative (GPCI) is a vision and a strategic plan presented to the University and the broader Ithaca community. The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA) presents this document as a way to identify and address critical issues in graduate and professional student life at Cornell University. The GPCI will be a living document, helping to guide the actions of the GPSA and the university administration year after year.

The incredible diversity of the graduate and professional students and the diverse needs of the community warrant the development of a strategic plan. Graduate and professional students take classes, teach courses, conduct research, and provide outreach to the broader community. The graduate and professional student community also is the most diverse community on campus with over 37% considered international students and 33% of American students self-identified as members of a minority group. The GPSA developed this strategic plan as a way to integrate and connect common issues among the entire community.

The GPCI was developed in a collaborative, comprehensive, and strategic way. The GCI Update Committee, an ad hoc committee created by the GPSA, wrote the document and worked with the administration throughout the process to develop action statements that are implementable. Hundreds of graduate and professional students participated in numerous forums to give input on the plan. The GCI Update Committee developed eight topics to comprehensively cover the wide range of concerns for the graduate and professional student community. The plan includes strategic action statements for each of the topic areas to recommend reasonable, but important, steps that can be taken to improve the graduate and professional student experience at Cornell.

Eight Topic Areas

Graduate & Professional Student Center

The GPCI suggests that the Big Red Barn—the Graduate and Professional Student Center—could better foster interactions among graduate and professional students. The food and beverage service at the Big Red Barn could align more closely to what the graduate and professional student community would want in their center. The GPCI also asks that an expanded graduate and professional student center be included in long-term planning by the University. Additionally, Willard Straight Hall can serve graduate and professional students better. Finally, a centralized physical space should be set up to provide common resources that are available from different units across campus.

Career Resources

Acknowledging the substantial progress that has been made on career resources on campus in recent years, the GPCI asks that additional support be given for graduate students who are looking to pursue non-academic careers. The GPCI also recommends that offerings by Cornell Career Services be more accessible to and valuable for the graduate and professional student community and that transferable professional skills resources that span all fields be strengthened. Lastly, the GPCI

suggests that better data collection on alumni and current students can greatly improve the offering of career resources.

Mental Health & Well-being

Broadly, the GPCI recognizes that mental and physical health and well-being services for graduate and professional students need improvement. The GPCI strongly recommends that targeted emotional and psychological resources for graduate and professional students should be more adequately provided. The GPCI asks that physical fitness facilities and programs accommodate the unique needs of graduate and professional students. Work-related stress is an important dimension to being a graduate or professional student and the GPCI suggests that more and better programming could be offered to address these stressors. The GPCI additionally recognizes that the development of meaningful relationships can be facilitated better through programming.

Diversity & International Students

The graduate and professional student community is the most diverse community on campus, but many aspects of that diversity still need improvement. The GPCI suggests that the GPSA should work to increase the diversity of its membership and engage in more outreach. The GPCI also requests that additional consideration and resources should be given to support international students, Students of Color, female students, and LGBTQI graduate and professional students.

Family Services

Given that around 10% of graduate and professional students have children and almost 25% are married, family services are an important topic for the graduate and professional community. The GPCI recognizes that students with families should have access to high quality information about resources available to them and the student families should also have access to affordable child care options. The GPCI also encourages the university to be a supportive environment for students with families and stresses the importance of support for partners and spouses.

Housing

The GPCI addresses both on-campus and off-campus housing for graduate and professional students. The GPCI suggests that the university should consider various aspects of the university-run housing for graduate and professional students such as room allocation for families, parking for residents, and facilities. Additional resources could be provided for the vast majority of the graduate and professional student community who live off-campus as well. And the GPCI also suggests that the university could do more to facilitate a high quality of life for graduate and professional students who live off campus, in the broader Ithaca community.

Transportation

The GPCI offers a number of action statements to improve parking options for graduate and professional students. Additionally, the GPCI asks that the public transportation in Ithaca should be improved to better serve graduate and professional students. Some suggestions in the GPCI include selecting a graduate or professional to serve on the TCAT Board of Directors, creating a TCAT app for smartphones, and improving information available about public transit.

Sense of Community

The lack of a strong sense of community is a continual concern for graduate and professional students at Cornell. The GPCI recognizes that more could be done to improve opportunities for meaningful interactions and interdisciplinary collaboration across the broad community. Programming, events, and activities are important components to building social cohesion, connectedness, and communication and could be strengthened. Furthermore, the GPCI calls for increased support for students' personal growth and development, as well as better communication and integration across departments and units on campus. Cornell can and should support the development of a diverse and vibrant intellectual graduate and professional student community on campus.

Our Vision

The Graduate and Professional Community Initiative is a collaborative document offering a shared vision for the future of the graduate and professional student community at Cornell. The GPCI is intended to be a living document, revisited annually to reflect successes and changes on campus. The GCI Update Committee in academic year 2012–2013 hopes that each year the GPSA will revisit topic areas and focus resolutions, advocacy, and campus conversations on the various issues identified in the document. The GPCI represents a collaborative, comprehensive, and strategic vision for the GPSA and all graduate and professional students at Cornell University.

Introduction

What is the Graduate and Professional Community Initiative?

The Graduate and Professional Community Initiative (GPCI) is a vision and a plan presented to our University by the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA) to address critical issues in graduate and professional student life at Cornell University. The GPCI acknowledges the interconnected nature of the unique challenges graduate and professional students face at Cornell and the GPCI attempts to provide an integrated and proactive vision. The GPCI enables Cornell to direct, support, and protect efforts and projects that facilitate a cohesive graduate and professional student community. As a living document to be updated by future members of the graduate and professional student community, the GPCI will be able to respond to successes and additional challenges.

Why Create a Strategic Plan?

Our community makes up one third of the student population on campus. Graduate students include professional masters, research masters, and Ph.D. degree students in a wide variety of fields from real estate to plant biology and environmental engineering. Professional students study in the College of Veterinary Medicine, the Johnson School of Graduate Management, and the Law School. Some graduate and professional students mainly take classes; some mainly teach; some mostly do research; many more combine taking classes, teaching courses, and doing research. We work in the local community on class projects, serve on advisory boards, and take active roles in our neighborhoods. In the global community, we work on projects and research on every continent.

The graduate and professional student community is also the most diverse body on campus, with individuals from every state in the United States and dozens of countries around the world. Almost 50% of students in the incoming class in the Graduate School and over 37% of all graduate and professional students are international students.[1] Almost 33% of graduate and professional students from the US self-identify as members of a minority group.

A community with such a diversity of interests, programs, and backgrounds should have a collaborative, comprehensive, and strategic vision and plan created by the governing student body. A plan that is collaborative gathers input from across the diverse community and builds a group of community members to help carry out the plan; a plan that is comprehensive creates a vision that addresses all issues affecting the community as a whole; a plan that is strategic focuses objectives and action statements on realistic recommendations that can be implemented. We have, thus, written the Graduate Community Initiative as a collaborative, comprehensive, and strategic document.

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[1]   http://www.isso.cornell.edu/about/stats12-13.pdf

History of the Graduate and Professional Community Initiative

In March 2007, the GPSA presented the "Vision Statement for a Graduate Community Initiative[2]" (hereafter referred to as the 2007 GCI) to the Board of Trustees. In response, a working group, the GCI Task Force, was assembled from a broad group of stakeholders across the university to engage with the graduate and professional student community. This group was chaired by the Vice President of Cornell University, Susan Murphy, and the then Dean of the Graduate School, Sunny Power. This GCI Task Force formed subcommittees to address concerns relating to Career Services, Housing, Graduate and Professional Life and Programs, and Communication.

The initial enthusiasm within this Task Force was encouraging, but the global financial crisis of 2007–2008 changed the financial outlook of the University overnight. The long-term financial sustainability of the University was prioritized and the GCI Task Force dissolved with much of its work unfinished.

In order to contribute to the University's strategic planning and reimagining process, the graduate and professional community reviewed the GCI and the Task Force's work in a GPSA Town Hall meeting on March 1, 2010[3]. On March 15, 2010 the GPSA passed a resolution calling for the consideration of graduate and professional student needs in the on-going strategic planning process[4], which included the document entitled Raising the Bar[5], which made suggestions for how to encourage excellence in our graduate and professional student population. Consequently, the 2007 GCI was referenced in the University Strategic Plan[6] in the 7th objective under the heading "Educational Excellence." The objective (found on page 24 of the Strategic Plan) is to "Strengthen the capacity of graduate and professional programs to recruit and educate a diverse body of the very best students." Specifically, the Strategic Plan stated that:

> A 2007 document, entitled 'A Vision Statement for a Graduate Community Initiative' (GCI) and commissioned by the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, makes a number of recommendations for improving the support for and services provided to graduate students. These include proposals for a Graduate Student Center and Graduate Resource Center that would enhance institutional career services for graduate students. The GCI document warrants continued discussion and consideration by the university, with appropriate weighing of the financial trade-offs.

For the past six years, the 2007 GCI has remained a key component of the GPSA's efforts to enhance the graduate and professional community and for graduate and professional students to engage with the broader university community. Administrators continue to refer to the 2007 GCI as a "living document," guiding their decision-making processes in areas across the University. The Graduate School, under the leadership of Barbara Knuth, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, has consistently provided regular updates to the GPSA on the progress toward realizing the

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2   http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20070312GraduateCommunityInitiative
3   http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20100301Minutes
4   http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20100315R13
5   http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20100402RaisingtheBar.pdf
6   http://www.cornell.edu/strategicplan/docs/060410-strategic-plan-final.pdf

recommendations of the 2007 GCI.

The GPSA wishes to continue the engaging and collaborative partnership between the graduate and professional student community and the Cornell University administration in the design and implementation of decisions impacting graduate and professional student life. At the GPSA's first meeting of the 2012–2013 academic year in August 2012, the GPSA created the Ad Hoc Committee to Assess the Progress On and Update the Recommendations of the Graduate Community Initiative (GCI Update Committee)[7]. The present document, now entitled the Graduate and Professional Community Initiative, represents the work of the GCI Update Committee, the GPSA, and countless stakeholders across campus who participated in discussions and focus groups, met with us, provided feedback, and contributed directly to the its construction.

The Benefits

Integrating a wide range of topic areas into a single comprehensive document will help the GPSA communicate the most pressing issues of the graduate and professional student community to the administration. This collaborative, comprehensive, and strategic document will serve as our guiding vision for the next five years. The collaborative and cross-disciplinary approach that this process has embodied provides solutions that the university can be assured will better the lives of graduate and professional students. The comprehensive approach means that the university can identify solutions that meet the needs of our entire community. The strategic approach guarantees that the specific recommendations are based on the realities of limited resources and that through collaboration, the recommendations can be implemented over the next five years to maximize their positive impact.

This collaborative, comprehensive, and strategic plan will energize the GPSA and the graduate and professional student community, and through partnerships addressing particular components of the plan, the GPSA can engage undergraduates, employees, and faculty to work together on shared goals for the betterment of the Cornell community. A more integrated graduate and professional student community will create more engaged alumni who may prove to be generous donors to the university, choosing to give more money to the institution that supported the post-undergraduate stage of their intellectual development. A stronger graduate and professional student community will help facilitate recruitment and retention of outstanding students, scholars, researchers, and citizens from around the world.

The Process

The GPSA created the GCI Update Committee during the first Assembly meeting on August 27th, 2012, in Resolution 1[8]. The GCI Update Committee consisted of graduate and professional students from across fields and in various stages of their graduate or professional education. The

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7   http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20120827R1
8   http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20120827R1

committee first developed the framework of the eight topic areas and then evaluated the success of the 2007 GCI based upon each topic area. The committee then analyzed the state of the graduate and professional student community to assess the progress made since the 2007 GCI was written. Administrators provided university-level updates based on each topic area.

A number of forums were held across campus to obtain input from the graduate and professional student community. A community-wide town hall was organized in the Fall semester, a number of discussions were held in the GPSA meetings, focus groups were organized throughout the year, the committee met directly with student groups, and the Dine & Discuss event was held in the Spring semester. Ultimately, hundreds of graduate and professional students provided input throughout the process.

The GCI Update Committee met with administrators regularly on all of the topic areas to make sure that action statements were both addressing the needs of the graduate and professional student community and also realistic. The committee also met with Ithaca-area community stakeholders on issues such as transportation and housing.

Each topic area was compiled and presented to the GPSA for discussion. During the discussions in the GPSA, a member of the GCI Update Committee facilitated and gathered input on the objectives and actions from fellow Assembly members. The strategic plan was then compiled into a single document and presented for approval by the GPSA.

Our Vision

The collaborative document that the Graduate and Professional Community Initiative represents is a shared vision for the future of the graduate and professional student community at Cornell. The Graduate and Professional Community Initiative is intended to be a living document, revisited annually to reflect successes and changes on campus. The GCI Update Committee in academic year 2012–2013 hopes that each year the GPSA will revisit topic areas and focus resolutions, advocacy, and campus conversations on the various issues identified in the document. The GPCI represents a collaborative, comprehensive, and strategic vision for the GPSA and all graduate and professional students at Cornell University.

Introduction

One of the primary recommendations of the 2007 GCI was that Cornell invest in the construction of an expanded graduate and professional student center that could "better accommodate and foster both academic and social interactions among graduate and professional students". The proposed student center was envisioned as a centralized community space with flexible multi-purpose rooms, as well as a hub of graduate and professional student services.

Cornell's current graduate and professional student center, the Big Red Barn (BRB), is a well-loved institution within the graduate and professional community. Unfortunately, the BRB struggles to meet the needs of Cornell's graduate and professional student population. The building is too small to accommodate more than one special event at a time and is consistently filled to capacity during weekly Tell Grads It's Friday (TGIF) events. According to a survey of a representative sample of graduate and professional students, conducted by the GPSA in 2011, nearly 36% of respondents had attended an event at the BRB in the previous month[1]. There are few substitutes on- or off-campus for the reliable and consistent social programming available at the BRB.

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1   GPSA Comprehensive Report on the 2011 Student Activity Fee-Funded Services Consumption Patterns Survey http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_gpsaf_report.pdf

In response to the 2007 GCI, the former Dean of the Graduate School, Sunny Power, and Vice President Susan Murphy had been charged with exploring the possibilities for a new location of a graduate community center as part of longer term strategic planning. However, further planning was put on hold as a result of the 2008 financial crisis. In an updated report on the progress on the GCI presented to the GPSA in September 2012, Barbara Knuth, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, stated that the Graduate School has worked with Facilities Services to guarantee the continued upkeep on the BRB, allowing the BRB to maintain current services for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, the challenges regarding the Big Red Barn Graduate & Professional Student Center continue to be one of the major structural factors limiting the development of a sense of community across our constituency.

Significant challenges remain:

1) Food service & atmosphere

Several historical and structural accidents have contributed to the under-utilization of the BRB by graduate and professional students during the hours of 8am to 2pm on weekdays, during which the BRB is operated by Cornell Dining. From 1992, when the BRB opened as the Graduate and Professional Student Center, to Fall 2002, Cornell Dining did not accept undergraduate 'meal equivalency' payments for food service at the BRB. However, during the 2002–2003 academic year, Cornell Dining began accepting these meal equivalencies for food while Trillium was being renovated. In the fall of 2003, the undergraduate form of payment accepted at the BRB changed to 'Big Red Bucks', which further encouraged undergraduate students to use the BRB during dining hours. As of 2010, 50% of the income for Cornell Dining at the Big Red Barn came from undergraduate meal plans[2].

At the same time, graduate students had a disincentive to participate in a Cornell Dining meal plan; the only meal plan offered to graduate students not living in on-campus housing, the 'Meals By Design' debit meal plan, included a non-refundable $50 administrative fee, which was offset by the 8% tax exempt discount only if a student purchased $750 in Big Red Bucks per year. Thanks to collaborations between the GPSA and Cornell Dining[3], graduate and professional students now have a better option. The new and improved 'Meals By Design' plan first offered in January 2013 has no administrative fee, allowing students to benefit from the 8% tax-exempt discount and offers an additional 5% discount for purchases at the BRB[4]. As of February 2013, enrollment in the Meals By Design plan has increased 378%.

Despite this notable improvement in affordability, it remains to be seen whether there will be a significant increase in the utilization of the BRB by graduate and professional students during dining hours as a result of this change. This is largely an issue of demand for the food and beverage service offered at the BRB and the general atmosphere of the space. To a limited extent, the menu at the BRB has been changed in response to student input. Over the years, Cornell Dining and the BRB staff have conducted several trials and surveys to identify opportunities to expand and improve

2   Big Red Barn Focus Groups Report, Cornell Dining, October 2010
3   http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20120924R4
4   http://living.sas.cornell.edu/dine/mealplans/mealsbydesign.cfm

food service in the BRB to meet graduate and professional student needs, but the outcomes have been mixed and progress has been slow. Several recommendations have emerged. Both a recent Cornell Dining focus group[5] and the 2007 GCI suggested that the BRB space would be improved by creating a tavern or coffee shop atmosphere, with a reading lounge and a recreation space. We continue to strongly support these proposals. Furthermore, the 2007 GCI proposed extending food and coffee service hours at the BRB through midnight, as graduate and professional students are often on campus outside of typical class hours and often late into the evening.

GPSA Resolution 13, passed in March 2012[6], stated that graduate and professional students should be given the opportunity to articulate their core values for their community space and to reimagine approaches to the food service at the BRB, including issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) which would allow vendors to submit proposals and bid to provide the food service at the Big Red Barn. In response, the Graduate School formally created the BRB Advisory Board[7]. The purpose of the BRB Advisory Board is to provide input on food and programming, as well as look for opportunities to better serve the graduate and professional student community.

2) Programming spaces

Since the 2007 GCI, there has been no increased allocation of flexible space for meetings and events for graduate and professional student organizations. In general, there is a lack of data on the usage of Willard Straight Hall (WSH) and the demand for alternative programming spaces by graduate and professional student organizations. Officially, space in WSH is available to graduate and professional student organizations, although scheduling difficulties frequently occur. WSH is perceived as being less accessible to graduate and professional students than to undergraduate students.

Yet again, a structural accident has contributed to graduate and professional students being less involved in the management of WSH. The Student Union Board (SUB) oversees policy, space usage, and booking decisions in WSH[8]. However, this same organization also does programming, which is funded by the undergraduate Student Assembly Activity Fee. The SUB charter says: "One Graduate student can gain limited membership; however they are prohibited from voting on any spending or policy changes regarding how SUB uses its budget from the undergraduate student activity fee." To our knowledge, no graduate student has ever held this position. Indeed, there is little interest among graduate students to be involved in organizing programming at the WSH or usage of the SA Activity Fee funds, which in practice is the primary function of this organization.

If WSH is to be a student union for all students at Cornell, it is important that graduate and professional students are included in the process when major decisions regarding building policy and space usage are made. This was made clear when the SUB decided to close the pottery studio in WSH in April 2011[9], which was a significant disappointment to the graduate and professional students who utilized the space. Given the current structure and operation of the SUB, the seat on the SUB for a graduate and professional student clearly does not represent meaningful involvement in the operations of Willard Straight Hall. Thus, there continues to be a need to explore ways

5   Big Red Barn Focus Groups Report, Cornell Dining, October 2010
6   http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20120326R13v2
7   http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/about-us/newsletter-fall-2012/big-red-barn
8   http://dos.cornell.edu/straight/student_union_board.cfm
9   http://cornellsun.com/section/news/content/2011/03/31/student-union-board-close-pottery-studio

of increasing access to flexible, multi-purpose programming spaces for graduate and professional students.

3) Virtual versus physical resource spaces

To address the demand for a centralized physical space for graduate student life initiatives, the Office of Graduate Student Life website was envisioned as a virtual hub with content designed to fulfill the goals of providing career and family resources, mentoring materials and event announcements across departments, fields and programs. The new Graduate School website[10] was launched in April 2011. In addition, starting in February 2012 Graduate School Announcements are now emailed directly to students on a weekly basis. Consequently, access to information has improved significantly in recent years. However, whether a virtual resource is sufficient in the long-term is unclear; there remain opportunities to continue to improve access to information about graduate and professional student services.

The recommendation of the 2007 GCI represented a novel vision for what an ideal graduate and professional student community space could look like. We understand that many of those original recommendations are not realistic or feasible in the short-term. However there is simply no substitute for a physical space when it comes to developing a sense of community. There remain many opportunities to make significant progress toward the vision for graduate and professional student community space articulated in the 2007 GCI.

Objectives

Objective 1: Enhance the operation of the Big Red Barn to better foster both academic and social interactions among graduate and professional students

Rationale:

Modest changes to the current operation of the Big Red Barn may profoundly impact the progress toward the vision for graduate and professional student community space articulated in the 2007 GCI. The BRB should focus on creating an environment that serves the needs of the graduate and professional student community (see also Sense of Community, Objective 2).

Actions:
    a. Form a working group that consists of graduate and professional students to work with the Associate Dean of Student & Academic Affairs, the Director of the Big Red Barn, and other relevant administrators to significantly reimagine the operation of the Big Red Barn.
    b. Support the operation of the BRB Advisory Board to serve as a continuing oversight body.

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10 http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/

c. Improve communications about BRB events and programming, including the availability of beverage service after 2pm on weekdays.
d. Continue funding maintenance at an adequate level and building upgrades as needed until an expanded graduate and professional student center can be created.
e. Consider ways to flexibly partition space in the BRB to create more private areas for events or quiet study.
f. Expand programming throughout the day to increase the usage of the space by graduate and professional students, including programming that supports study or research (see also Mental Health & Well-being, Objective 3a).
g. Upgrade electrical and audio/visual technology in the BRB.
    i. Increase the number of electrical outlets.
    ii. Install networked televisions to enable easier viewing for events at the BRB.

Objective 2: Reimagine the food and beverage service provided at the Big Red Barn

Rationale:

The Big Red Barn's centralized location on campus makes it an ideal space to purchase food and beverages, to relax between commitments, and to spend time with friends and colleagues throughout the day. A functional and relaxing space which supports lively interactions among students can help foster a sense of community. Of course, access to convenient and affordable food and beverages is important for graduate and professional student general well-being, but this is especially true when the same space also serves as the primary hub of social and community life on campus. A reimagining of the food service offered at the BRB represents an opportunity. A thoughtfully-designed coffee shop at the BRB could serve as a pick-me-up between classes, a reward after a long day, a stimulating environment for creativity and productivity, or simply a place to relax and spend time with friends. Narrowing the focus of the food service may also have the benefit of reducing the space dedicated to food preparation.

Actions:
a. Create a lively and interactive atmosphere at the Big Red Barn.
b. Convert the food service area to a coffee shop, focused on a high-quality café experience rather than on meal service.
c. Emphasize quality and value, rather than just affordability, in the food and beverage offerings.
d. Expand the availability of healthy, as well as socially- and environmentally- conscious food and beverage offerings.
e. Enhance the atmosphere and comfort of the BRB space, including upgrades to the heating/cooling systems, furnishings, and lighting.
f. Extend the café hours into the evening, so students working late on campus can purchase coffee and light snacks on central campus.
g. Re-assess the Memorandum of Understanding with Cornell Dining, particularly the clauses

specifying that Cornell Catering must be the exclusive caterer for events held at the BRB and the restrictions on bringing in outside food.

h. In the event that the action items in Objective 1 and 2 cannot be met, consider issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP), which would allow vendors to submit proposals and bid to provide the food service at the BRB, as first proposed in GPSA R13.

Objective 3: Enhance graduate and professional student access to flexible programming spaces on campus and expand usage of Willard Straight Hall

Rationale:

There continues to be substantial demand for flexible programming spaces on campus. Flexible programming spaces refers to multi-purpose rooms, meeting spaces, spaces with the A/V technology for multimedia presentations, and athletic spaces (such as dance studios, mat rooms, etc.) that students can reserve for meetings, practices, and events. Access to Willard Straight Hall programming spaces is designed with undergraduate students in mind. Despite recent efforts to improve usage of the space by graduate and professional students, graduate and professional students do not currently have meaningful involvement in the allocation of space within Willard Straight Hall.

Actions:

a. Amend the Student Union Board charter to require the approval of the GPSA for significant changes to WSH building policy and space usage, to increase graduate and professional students oversight of scheduling and operations in WSH.

b. Broaden the marketing of WSH as a student programming space among the graduate and professional student community.

c. Consider how to provide reliable access to programming spaces on campus.
    i. Utilize information gathered from the Space Utilization Study[11] to improve access to programming spaces on campus.
    ii. Invest in a usable online room reservation system (unlike R25, which is not user-friendly), which includes centralized information about spaces on campus (e.g. capacity, A/V availability, restrictions, costs, etc.).
    iii. Increase access to dance studios, mat rooms, and other athletic spaces on campus, which are in high demand by student organizations.
    iv. Improve access to programming spaces on campus with appropriate technology for multimedia presentations, film screenings, or video/teleconferencing.

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11 Ithaca Campus Space Utilization Study: http://www.dpb.cornell.edu/documents/1000502.pdf

Objective 4: Information about graduate and professional student services should be centralized and available in one location

Rationale:

Even though hosting staff offices at the BRB is not physically possible, there are still gains to be made from creating a physical space that serves as the hub of graduate and professional student services, such as professional development, family services, teaching support, and mental health resources. Currently, resources for each of the above student services are available in different buildings spread across campus. Virtual resources are similarly located on different websites each maintained by independent units. The lack of centralization of resources requires that students seek out information, often with little awareness of the plethora of resources that are available at Cornell.

Actions:

a. Create a small resource center with a well-stocked brochure stand and computer kiosks in the BRB designed to direct students to the many resources available on campus.
b. Centralize graduate and professional student services, where appropriate.
c. Increase the consistency and reliability of programming, workshops, and events on campus, both in terms of timing and location, with the goal of increasing attendance at, and awareness of, events (see also Career Resources, Objective 3b).

Objective 5: Continue to explore the long-term goal of an expanded graduate and professional student center as a centralized space for graduate life initiatives

Rationale:

The 2007 Graduate Community Initiative stated the GPSA's desire to see an expanded center for graduate and professional students that includes space and resources for families, mentorship and teaching workshops, recreational facilities, places for cross-departmental lectures or workshops, flexible multipurpose spaces, offices for graduate and professional student group leadership, and a place that creates a sense of identity for graduate and professional students at Cornell. Currently, the Big Red Barn provides many services that the 2007 GCI called for, but is limited by space, availability, and lack of small rooms. While the current financial situation of the University is not promising for new construction the near-term, the University must begin discussions about the long-term prospect of creating a true graduate and professional student center that meets our community's needs.

Actions:

a. Continue to consider the creation an expanded graduate and professional student center with the resources listed in the 2007 GCI in long-term strategic planning, long-term capital financing, and alumni affairs and development.
b. Design a community space where facilitating interactions is a feature of the space—a similar approach to that taken in the design of the Cornell NYC Tech Campus.

Career Resources

Introduction

Although students pursue graduate and professional education for a variety of reasons, obtaining a job in a particular field is a significant reason. Indeed in professional degree programs—whether through one of Cornell's three professional schools (1,819 students[1]) or one of its many professional master's degrees (1,655 students[2])—this goal is explicit. However, for the 2,947 research doctoral students, who compose roughly 44% of the total graduate and professional student population at Cornell,[3] post-graduate employment is often uncertain. For many, the traditional preference was for a tenure-track faculty appointment. However, such positions are increasingly scarce, and their availability has not kept pace with the increasing number of qualified applicants. Thus, we must do more to facilitate alternative career opportunities for graduate students. While we strongly believe in the life of the mind and the intellectual enrichment provided by graduate school, more can be done to promote a career-oriented approach.

The 2007 GCI contained an extensive section on career resources for graduate and professional students and their partners. This section argued for a

1 As of Fall 2011, the most recent final data available: http://dpb.cornell.edu/documents/1000520.pdf (page 48)
2 As of Spring 2011, the most recent data available: http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/field_file/2010_2011_Annual_Report_Final.pdf (page 15)
3 Ibid.

two-pronged focus: assist students and partners with their career needs while in Ithaca, and then assist with the transition into the workplace after graduation. While offering a clear list of seven concrete recommendations, it noted that in general, existing career resources for research doctoral students were often focused on academia as the only path. Furthermore, it identified as an obstacle the fact that the Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Life was the only office explicitly charged with assisting graduate students in career planning.

We commend the remarkable and sustained progress made in this area since 2007. In September 2011, the Graduate School inaugurated the new Office of Inclusion and Professional Development with the creation of an Associate Dean for Inclusion and Professional Development and an Assistant Dean for Professional Development. Since that time, this office has engaged in the focused creation of new resources, as well as consolidation of existing resources, to assist graduate students in both academic and non-academic professional development. At this same time, a significant gap in programming and advising was addressed with the creation of the Graduate and International Career Advisor position within Cornell Career Services.

Nevertheless, there remain significant opportunities for improvement in the area of career resources for graduate and professional students at Cornell, as outlined in the four objectives below.

Objectives

Objective 1: Support graduate students who choose to pursue non-academic careers

Rationale:

For the last several decades, the supply of tenure-track positions has not kept pace with the number of doctorate holders produced by universities—this is especially the case in the social sciences and the humanities. This disconnect does not result solely from macroeconomic factors, having persisted through periods of both economic expansion and contraction. Cornell must therefore prepare its students not only for traditional academic positions, but also alternative positions within the academy ("alt-ac") and non-academic positions. This latter term should be read in the broadest possible sense: from government and not-for-profit organizations to think tanks and industry. Part of the support for non-academic careers could include cross-disciplinary activities or classes that expose a wide variety of graduate and professional students to non-academic projects. Cornell must be at the cutting edge in providing career resources for the growing population of the graduate community looking for non-academic careers.

Actions:
  a. Encourage all faculty to support students who choose to pursue non-academic careers. A first step could be to provide Directors of Graduate Studies with more material and information concerning careers not traditionally pursued by students in their field.
  b. Increase opportunities for networking with alumni, especially those who have successfully

pursued non-traditional career paths (see also Objective 4).

c. Organize an annual on-campus career fair dedicated to graduate and professional students pursuing non-faculty positions.[4]

d. Offer increased interaction opportunities with professionals in non-academic careers beyond those who are Cornell alumni. Such interactions provide students the opportunity to see the variety of career options available after graduate/professional education.

e. Support graduate and professional students in exploring all career possibilities. For example, students should not be shut out for exploring non-academic options within a field that does not traditionally place its students outside the academy.

f. Support the creation of multi-field graduate and professional student organizations around particular career interests, like the Cornell Graduate Consulting Club. Such groups are likely to be student-initiated and led, and their particular needs will vary on a case by case basis.

g. Provide incentives and support for multidisciplinary academic collaborations like AguaClara, Student Multidisciplinary Applied Research Team (SMART), or Sustainable Global Enterprise (SGE) in the Johnson School, which create working relationships between a variety of graduate and professional students from both academic and non-academic focused graduate programs (See also Sense of Community, Objective 1).

h. Facilitate student networking, collaborations, and professional development between Ithaca-based graduate and professional programs and the New York City-based programs at Weill Cornell Medical College and Cornell NYC Tech.

Objective 2: Continue to make Cornell Career Services more accessible to and valuable for graduate and professional students

Rationale:

In the 2007 GCI, the GPSA offered a vision for a comprehensive career resource center that would synthesize a variety of career resource initiatives for graduate students and their partners. The document stated the need for an increased level of resources focused on academic careers as well as non-academic careers. The GPSA also called for an expansion of career advice for international students and domestic students looking for international careers. The University responded by creating the position of Graduate and International Career Advisor in Career Services, which serves a large number of graduate students who previously did not have access to career services. In 2012–2013 alone, this office offered over 30 graduate-focused career events on campus. While the position of Graduate and International Career Advisor is a welcome addition to the various career resources on campus, this single staff member alone serves thousands of graduate (and undergraduate) students, a number too large for these services to truly be accessible to all who need them.

Additionally, the Graduate School has expanded the career service offerings for graduate and professional student partners who relocate to Ithaca. Obtaining employment for a "trailing" spouse/partner is a particular challenge to the 31% of graduate and professional students who are married

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4   Student Advocacy Town Hall (November 15, 2012) http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_town_hall_report.pdf

or co-habitate with their partners[5]. Given the challenges of the economy and limited job opportunities in the region, this particular problem is of concern to graduate and professional students and was identified in the 2007 GCI as a major issue.

Actions:

a. Expand support for graduate student career advising, providing additional resources including staff, money for programs, in-kind support from other units, and an expanded range of expertise.

b. Continue to improve communication tools for reaching graduate and professional students (see also Sense of Community, Objective 2).
   - Since 2011, the University has taken several significant steps to reach all graduate and professional students more effectively. However, it remains the case that information is often not reaching those who need it most. It is our hope that as the trend toward centralization of information availability continues, graduate and professional students will increasingly be able to consult a single resource to keep themselves informed.

c. Expand career services offerings for student partners and have career service staff on campus that are open year round to advise student partners (see also Family Services, Objective 4c).

d. The Graduate School and the professional schools should collect data, where possible and appropriate, on student partners and track job placements for those partners who are looking for jobs in Ithaca or the region and use these numbers to evaluate career services for student partners.

e. Continue to promote and improve community-based resources for graduate students pursuing non-academic careers.
   - In many fields, pursuing a career outside academia after the PhD is atypical. To give one example, VersatilePhD offers graduate students the opportunity to directly interact with people who have successfully made this transition, as well as others currently facing the same issues. As new resources are developed in the future, Cornell should continue to strive to meet this need.

f. Improve CCNet to better serve graduate and professional student needs.
   - CCNet is often perceived as having been specifically designed for the undergraduate experience. For example, when graduate students in a particular program are looking to work in a field with which their degree may not be traditionally associated, CCNet blocks access to listings.

g. Work toward equal offerings for all graduate and professional students, regardless of the college to which their department belongs. This also offers opportunities for the sharing of best practices, since several colleges currently offer programs which would likely benefit other colleges.

h. Expand and promote the existing undergraduate-focused career services programming that would also be suitable for graduate and professional students.

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5   The Comprehensive Report on the 2011 Student Activity Fee-Funded Services Consumption Patterns Survey, page 6. http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_gpsaf_report.pdf

Objective 3: Support the development of transferable professional skills

Rationale:

The GPSA supports the notion that graduate and professional school can be productively viewed as the acquisition of a set of core competencies. Though there are clearly field-specific competencies, there also exist many that transcend disciplinary boundaries such as public speaking, maintaining a project budget, and interpersonal relationship building. Given the varying ability of fields and programs to offer professional development workshops, it is logical to identify areas of commonality where consolidation will be effective. The Graduate School and professional school orientations are useful events where these workshops can be advertised and, in some cases, even be offered.

Actions:
   a. Continue to offer general workshops, focusing on skills that are applicable to all fields such as writing for a non-technical audience, effective resume writing and networking skills[6].
   b. Offer programming in a *dependable* and *recurring* manner.[7]
      - In previous years, before the creation of OIPD, professional development programming was often irregular and ad hoc. Fortunately, since 2011, this trend has reversed, and a regular series of workshops are now offered. This trend should be continued in the future.
   c. Provide resources for Directors of Graduate Studies to support their own field programming and to make students in their fields aware of the Graduate School offerings (see also Mental Health & Well-Being, Objective 3).
   d. Continue to improve the Graduate School Orientation, especially by increasing the number of students who stay for the entire event and by increasing the number of cross-departmental connections. Orientation is the only time in a student's graduate career when all fields and programs are together (see also Sense of Community, Objective 2 and Family Services, Objective 4).

Objective 4: Increase the level of data collection, both regarding current students and alumni

Rationale:

The level of data collection and analysis varies considerably across colleges and fields. While the Johnson Graduate School of Management tracks their alumni in great detail, other fields may have no organized system of tracking at all. This data collection also varies prior to graduation. The

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6   Student Advocacy Town Hall (November 15, 2012) http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_town_hall_report.pdf
7   Student Advocacy Town Hall (November 15, 2012) http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_town_hall_report.pdf

move toward computerized registration and forms provides an opportunity to make sure that students are meeting key milestones (e.g. A exams, special committee formation) in a timely fashion, and to provide targeted assistance where it is most needed.

Actions:
a. Share as broadly as possible the results of the new survey regime implemented by the Graduate School in 2012–2013 and continue these surveys in the future. The survey of students who are accepted but choose not to matriculate especially fills a gap.
b. Track graduate alumni in a more rigorous fashion, especially with regard to their career development. Currently, some colleges (e.g., Human Ecology, Engineering) have excellent alumni databases, but in other colleges, these are virtually non-existent. Graduation Manager only asks students what they are doing immediately after graduation; systematic follow-up is not performed in most fields.
c. Use computerized field metrics to identify students who are experiencing trouble, like those who are not on track to complete their exams in a timely fashion. While this action is not specifically related to career resources, such an approach could also identify more systemic issues, like a particular advisor whose students routinely miss such deadlines.
d. Work with Alumni Affairs and Development to strengthen the graduate student presence in the Cornell Alumni Association.

Mental Health and Well-Being

Introduction

Issues relating to mental health and well-being are a common concern within the graduate and professional student population. Work done by the GPSA over the past two years highlights that mental health and well-being are important to the graduate and professional community at Cornell University. Graduate and professional students face unique challenges, which include a rigorous academic environment, financial burdens, and a sometimes uncertain professional future.

For research graduate students, the advisor-advisee relationship plays an extremely important role in determining the quality of the graduate and professional student experience. However, the 'self guided' nature of graduate study may mean that some students rarely meet with their advisors. Even more concerning, many students experience strained relationships with their primary advisor and members of their special committee. The unique mental health needs of graduate and professional students have also been identified in other large university settings[1,2]. However, specific features of Cornell Univer-

1   Hyun, J., Quinn, B., Madon, T., & Lustig, S. (2007). Mental health need, awareness, and use of counseling services among international graduate students. *Journal of American College Health, 56,* 109–118.

2   Hyun, J., Quinn, B., Madon, T., & Lustig, S. (2006). Graduate student mental health: Needs assessment and utilization of counseling services. *Journal of College Student Development, 47,* 247–266.

sity and Ithaca's geographic location may add to the challenges of addressing the mental health needs of the graduate and professional student population.

Mental health was identified as a major concern in the 2007 Graduate Community Initiative and has been a priority for subsequent GPSA groups. In December of 2011, the GPSA Student Advocacy Committee and the Graduate School hosted an event titled "Dine & Discuss: Graduate and Professional Student Mental Health and Well-being" to discuss mental health and well-being and to explore how graduate and professional students perceive mental health resources and identify additional avenues of support. Sixty graduate and professional students attended the event and suggested many ideas about how mental health resources can be made better available to graduate and professional students[3]. This event led to the passage of GPSA Resolution 16 in Spring 2012, which highlighted issues of graduate and professional student mental health and well-being[4]. Resolution 16 focused on four recommendations:

1. Make opportunities for preventative health behaviors more accessible. Consider extending wellness memberships/offerings to graduate and professional students that mirror those available to staff.
2. Increase education about graduate and professional school. Consider both institutionalized courses of study and ongoing opportunities for students to learn about topics such as:
    a. Support services (both for academic and health purposes),
    b. Advisor relationships, and
    c. Dissertation guidance.
3. Promote use of health resources. Consider graduate and professional schedules when creating hours (e.g. for Gannett services, Let's Talk hours, etc) and facilitating peer counseling programs.
4. Collect more, better data. In particular, conduct a Quality of Life Survey (using valid measures and a random sample) for a more comprehensive picture of issues pertaining to mental health and well-being of students.

Cornell University has already taken important steps to address these issues by increasing promotion of wellness resources through emails to all graduate and professional students, increasing the number of wellness workshops, and by implementing new surveys addressing the graduate and professional student experience. Student life is a critical mediator of a healthy student experience. Furthermore, Gannett and Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) have increased programming for graduate and professional students. Specifically, it is encouraging to see continued support for the "Let's Talk" programs, weekend hours for counseling services, and a growing number of support groups[5]. While there is a peer-based support available through the EARS program, graduate and professional students experience difficulty using this service since EARS counselors are often undergraduates and EARS currently does not mark whether its hours are staffed by undergraduate or graduate students. We also commend the Graduate School for creating the new Office of Inclusion and Professional Development, and the positions of Assistant Dean of Graduate

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3   http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_dine_and_discuss_report.pdf
4   http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20120423R16
5   http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20130121Minutes

Student Life and Graduate and International Career Advisor. Additionally, the recent partnership between the Graduate School and ClearPoint to provide financial counseling and education services to graduate and professional students at Cornell is encouraging[6].

Despite progress, this year's GPSA identified a continuing need to gather information from students to better understand how to improve mental health and well-being. In the fall of 2012 the GPSA Student Advocacy committee hosted an open Town Hall to discuss three important student topics, including mental health and well-being[7]. The questions asked during the Town Hall were a direct follow up to the 2011 Dine & Discuss, focusing on specific ways to improve mental health and well-being. We have integrated the student-driven data collected over multiple years into four main objectives that we hope will guide the continuing efforts of the GPSA, the Cornell Graduate School, Gannett, Student and Academic Services and other interested parties in supporting the mental health and general well-being of the diverse graduate and professional population at Cornell University.

Objectives

Objective 1: Provide resources for emotional and psychological support tailored to the graduate and professional experience

Rationale:

A graduate and professional student faces many stressors during the course of their studies. Both national studies and internal student discussion at Cornell suggest that providing resources that support mental health and well-being should be considered a major priority. Two of the main obstacles to mental health identified by graduate and professional students are a demanding work environments and the under-utilization of existing health resource[8]. As such, it is important not only to continue supporting counseling and support services, but also to make sure these services are targeting graduate and professional students and providing preventative health information that supports the unique stressors they face. At the 2012 Town Hall, it was suggested that improving department-based support may be better able address the specific needs faced by graduate and professional students.

Actions:
  a. Provide counseling and health services tailored to the unique needs of graduate and professional students.
  b. Establish peer-to-peer department-based support, e.g. a confidential network of graduate and professional students who are trained to support, encourage, defuse and informally

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6 http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/life-cornell/cornell-resources
7 http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_town_hall_report.pdf
8 http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_dine_and_discuss_report.pdf

mediate during times of stress or conflict[9].

    c. Provide workshops for both students and advisors about how to manage advisor-advisee relationships.

    d. Increase access to mental health resources for students and their partners, including relationship counseling services.

    e. Increase education about health resources through email distribution and calendar notices.

    f. Increase support for the unique challenges to mental health and well-being faced by international students (see also Diversity & International Students, Objective 2b).

Objective 2: Support and promote graduate and professional student physical fitness

Rationale:

    Graduate and professional students have indicated that exercise is the most common way they combat stress and improve their mental well-being[10]. Exercise helps to alleviate mental and physical health problems that commonly affect graduate and professional students. The benefits of exercise include improved sleep, enhanced mood, and alleviation of anxiety and long-term depression, as well as a decreased risk of suicide, diabetes, heart disease and obesity[11]. One of Cornell's top objectives is to "promote the health and well-being of students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional) as a foundation for academic and life success."[12] Part of this is providing access to preventative health care (e.g. physical fitness). Currently, Cornell Fitness Centers (CFC) are not subsidized by the University. The result is a set of fitness centers that are over capacity and unable to supply membership to all interested students. During peak gym hours, students sometimes cannot access the cardio machines and weight training areas because they are too crowded. The lack of space in the free weight areas has also led to unsafe work-out conditions and student injuries. Cardio machine wait times can exceed four hours and sometimes students are not even allowed to enter the gyms because they have reached fire capacity. The demand for exercise classes, swimming pools, Lynah Rink, and athletic courts also exceeds capacity.

    Graduate and professional students also face obstacles accessing the fitness and recreation centers due to their demanding work schedules. While many graduate and professional students are on campus working during breaks and weekends, the fitness centers operate with severely reduced hours at those times. Currently, the Cornell fitness centers have the fewest weekend and break hours available of the four Ivy League schools with comparable student population sizes. This is a result of having an inadequate number of undergraduate employees to staff five disjointed locations at those times.

    While cost is an issue that some graduate and professional students cite as a deterrent to exercise, over half of all graduate students purchase a fitness membership each year. However, it is not

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9   For an example, see http://studentlife.mit.edu/mediation/refs

10   http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_dine_and_discuss_report.pdf

11   Fox, K. R. (1999). The influence of physical activity on mental well-being. *Public Health Nutrition, 2,* 411–418.

12   Cornell University at its Sesquicentennial: A Strategic Plan 2010–2015 http://www.cornell.edu/strategicplan/docs/060410-strategic-plan-final.pdf

equitable that Cornell's Wellness Program for faculty and staff only contributes $69 to the fitness centers per member, while students pay $145, both as of academic year 2012–2013, especially when the loss of revenue prevents the fitness centers from providing amenities and services that meet student demands.

Ultimately, building a large centralized fitness center with adequate access to public transit would solve most of the problems graduate and professional students face when trying to access physical fitness amenities, especially the issues of inadequate space and short hours of operation during weekends and breaks. However, we are aware that this is not a realistic short term solution.

Actions:
  a. Develop strategies to reduce crowding and increase access to fitness and recreation facilities
     i. Include building a large all-inclusive recreation center, with adequate space to meet the fitness and recreation demands of all students, in long-term strategic planning, long-term capital financing, and alumni affairs and development to replace Helen Newman and Appel Commons.
        • Any plan to build new amenities should consider graduate and professional students' needs, especially their ability to access the amenity.
     ii. In the absence of a new recreation center
        • Offer a two-tier pricing scheme for an "off hours" and an "all hours" membership to reduce crowding in the fitness centers.
        • Consider renovations to the current fitness/recreation centers to allocate more space to exercise-based recreation. For example, consider expanding fitness and recreation amenities into the "lounge" area in Noyes Community Recreational Center.
  b. Consider allocating Graduate and Professional Student (GPS) Activity Fee byline funding to the Cornell Fitness Centers in exchange for memberships, reduced membership prices, increased membership benefits and/or improved amenities.
  c. Increase hours of fitness center operation during breaks and weekends or develop supplemental membership plans for graduate and professional students that can extend membership to a set of private gyms when Cornell fitness centers are not in operation.
     • We recognize that there are city level agreements that require the CFCs be separate and not associated or competing with private gyms. This must be considered when implementing the above action.
  d. Charge an equitable rate between graduate and professional students and the Cornell Wellness Program for faculty and staff for CFC membership.
  e. Coordinate with TCAT to make sure buses from areas of high graduate and professional student concentration stop at least one fitness center during CFC hours of operation, especially during breaks.
  f. Incorporate physical activities into social programming, such as organizing graduate and professional student intramural sports leagues, cross-departmental olympics, and casual 'pick-up' games.
  g. Create a free short term parking policy for fitness center users at the lots near the buildings during holiday, fall, winter, and spring breaks (in addition to the free nights and weekends policy).

h. Include fitness amenities in the redesign of graduate and professional student housing, so that graduate and professional students who live in on campus housing have similar access to fitness centers as undergraduates who live in on-campus housing (see also Housing, Objective 1a & 1b).

i. Create a limited number of fitness classes that restrict enrollment to graduate and professional students either through the Cornell Fitness Centers or physical education courses.

j. Provide fitness information on the website that is free and open to the university community. For example: information about popular calisthenics and yoga routines, common Ithaca jogging routes, and/or community-based fitness opportunities.

Objective 3: Support programming regarding graduate and professional student productivity to reduce work-related stress

Rationale:

Struggles with time management and problems with advisor-advisee communication are some of the primary stressors facing graduate and professional students. The academic environment for graduate and professional students often lacks structure and oversight. Graduate and professional students often come from either industry jobs where they are in regular contact with a supervisor, or undergraduate programs where requirements and coursework are highly-structured. The lack of clear short-term goals or consistent oversight from faculty in graduate school can lead to decision paralysis and procrastination, followed by periods of intense continuous work and stress. Addressing the particular work-related stressors commonly encountered by graduate and professional students is an important component of a targeted approach to mental health and well-being.

Actions:

a. Provide resources for fields' Directors of Graduate Studies, both to support their own field programming, as well as to make students more aware of the resources available across campus (see also Career Resources, Objective 3c).

b. Develop a set of *field-specific* resource lists that direct graduate and professional students to relevant and commonly-utilized campus resources.

c. Continue offering generally-applicable programming on time management, writing and research skills, navigating life as a graduate or professional student, and advisor-advisee relationships (see also Career Resources, Objective 3a & 3b).

d. Expand and promote the available resources for solving graduate advisor-advisee conflicts (see also Objective 1c).

e. Target procrastination at earlier stages in a graduate or professional student's career by creating a program where students get together to quietly read, think, and problem solve (similar to, but separate from the Graduate School's "thesis write-ins").

f. The Graduate School should expand the availability of their thesis write-ins to accommodate graduate students with differing schedules.

Objective 4: Support development of meaningful relationships through social events

Rationale:

At the 2012 Dine & Discuss, which focused on mental health, "social events" was stated as the best way to support mental health for graduate and professional students[13]. Furthermore, the third biggest challenge to mental health and well-being was self reported as "difficulty making friends." This theme is a recurring one. At the 2012 Town Hall in the fall, students again expressed desire for more social activity[14]. Specifically, students who participated agreed that more interdisciplinary mixers are needed to improve mental health and well-being, as well as a sense of community. Cornell supports many social events. However, there should be a focus on making it easier to disseminate information about the many events happening on campus (see also Sense of Community, Objective 2).

Actions:
   a. Organize a graduate and professional student organization fair during new student orientations that allows all incoming and current graduate students to interact with other groups funded by the GPS Activity Fee (see also Sense of Community, Objective 2c).
   b. Improve the Cornell Events Calendar to be searchable by activity type and improve interfacing with students' personal calendars, such as a click and add system to link emails about events with Google Calendar (see also Sense of Community, Objective 2a).
   c. Focus on developing social programming that involves icebreakers, community service, and physical activity (see also Sense of Community, Objectives 1 and 2).
   d. Continue collecting data regarding the quality of established social events (see also Sense of Community, Objective 2e).

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13 http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_dine_and_discuss_report.pdf
14 http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_town_hall_report.pdf

Introduction

Creating a diverse community, one that is inclusive of differences that includes, but is not limited to, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, is critical for a vibrant academic community. It is also reflected in one of Cornell's cherished mottos: "Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Minds." In this section, we present recommendations for the GPSA and Cornell University as a whole to continue their work towards building a more inclusive and diverse graduate and professional student community.

We have separated student issues into four groups. First, we discuss issues affecting international students, students born and raised in foreign countries whose first extensive experience in the United States is at Cornell. Second, we discuss students who are born and/or raised in the United States who identify themselves as not white or not of European parentage, which we will call "Students of Color" (SOC) in this document. We also include sections on gender equality and on issues affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) students.

International students and Students of Color account for a majority of Cornell's graduate and professional student population. According to Cornell's Diversity and Inclusion website, in 2011–2012, "more than 55 percent of graduate students are foreign nationals, Hispanic Americans, American Indians, African Americans, Asian Americans, or identified themselves in more than

one racial/ethnic group."[1]

International students face many challenges when they come to the United States from their native countries. First, language and communication are two very significant barriers for international students whose first language is not English. Second, international students must adjust to a new culture and a new society when they come to the U.S. to study. Third, international students must adjust to a new set of laws and regulations, including the requirement to file U.S. tax returns annually. Fourth, international students face challenges with finding employment in the U.S. upon their graduation from Cornell. In order to help with their adjustment to life in the U.S., international students rely on the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO).

Often, Students of Color have grown up in the United States or another Western country, so the cultural adjustment is not as difficult as it may be for international students. However, Students of Color also encounter many challenges, largely with developing their personal identities. These students are often part of the first generation in their families to grow up in the United States. While these students are able to grow up accustomed to the American culture and society, they must also balance their American life and cultural practices with their unique cultural identities. At Cornell, there are four major graduate and professional student organizations for Students of Color: Black Graduate and Professional Student Association (BGPSA), Indigenous Graduate Student Association (IGSA), Latino Graduate Student Coalition (LGSC), and Society for Asian American Graduate Affairs (SAAGA). Since the 2007 GCI, all of these four organizations have grown significantly in membership, event production, and visibility in the Cornell community. The centers, which support the demographics of these four groups, have also grown in a similar fashion. In 2011, the Graduate School increased support for inclusion and professional development with creation of the Office of Inclusion and Professional Development (OIPD). The OIPD has been instrumental in facilitating collaborations among the four Students of Color organizations and building a more unified community.

The GPSA wishes to acknowledge that increasing access to graduate and professional education at Cornell is a critical component of creating a diverse and inclusive community. There are many unique challenges to promoting diversity through the graduate and professional student admissions process. Despite efforts to include and provide equal opportunity to graduate and professional students of all backgrounds, the fact remains that diversity is still lacking in many fields of study at Cornell. Lack of diversity at U.S. institutions is especially apparent within fields (typically STEM fields) that have a historical under-representation of both women and minorities[2]. Not only does this mean many potentially brilliant people do not have access to a Cornell education, it creates a cycle where the paucity of women and minority students creates an isolating environment for these students and serves to reinforce negative stereotypes. Admissions policies for graduate and professional programs is beyond the scope of this document, but the important role of recruitment and admissions in helping Cornell achieve its diversity goals cannot be understated.

The Graduate School and the University should be commended for increasing its commitment to diversity and inclusion in recent years, not just among graduate students, but also across the entire Cornell community. Substantial progress is evidenced by initiatives such as "Towards New

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1   http://diversity.cornell.edu/who-we-are
2   Nelson, D., Brammer, C. N., & Rhodes, H. (2007). *A national analysis of minorities in science and engineering faculties at research universities.* Retrieved from http://www.aaas.org/news/releases/2007/media/1031diversity_report.pdf

Destinations,"[3] the diversity initiatives of individual colleges, and the implementation of an improved system to address bias incidents[4]. We also highlight the recent establishment of the Office of Academic Diversity Initiatives, and the New Intercultural Center. We hope that this section of the GPCI serves as a guideline for advocacy for a diverse and inclusive graduate and professional student community at Cornell and outlines areas that can be improved upon.

Objectives

Please note: All communities discussed in this section are important. The order of objective statements 2–5 within this section does not reflect any priority of importance.

Objective 1: Increase diversity and representation within the GPSA

Rationale:

The GPSA represents all graduate and professional students, regardless of what they study, their race, color, national origin, gender, or sexual orientation, and the GPSA has an obligation to represent students on everything non-academic, including issues specific to diversity and international students. Yet during the preparation of the 2013 GPCI, it became apparent that issues pertinent to a diverse community were not consistently discussed by the GPSA. The lack of discussion about diversity within the GPSA is in part due to the growth of the four SOC organizations, remarkable support for international students across campus through the ISSO, and the existence of many organizations focused on gender and LGBTQI issues. We applaud these efforts and hope they continue to strengthen in the coming years. The construction and implementation of the 2013 GPCI presents an excellent opportunity for the GPSA to partner across campus and engage individual students, and general groups to work with the GPSA on these topics. As such, our first objective is the only objective that addresses all student groups discussed in this section.

Many of our Ivy League peers have addressed the need for more interaction, representation and communication in their respective graduate and professional student councils by creating positions designated for specific groups. We have consistently heard from student groups at Cornell that a voting stake may be important in order to achieve diverse participation in the GPSA and it seems that our peers agree with this sentiment. As such we recommend that the GPSA implement its own version of the "Toward New Destination" framework established by Cornell University and work towards a structure that adheres to the four principles of composition, engagement, inclusion and achievement of diverse and international students within the GPSA.

Actions:
    a.   The GPSA should establish a Diversity & International Students standing committee tasked with the following:

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3   http://diversity.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/documents/TNDFinalMarch2013.pdf
4   https://www.hr.cornell.edu/diversity/reporting/bias_response.html

      i.   Communicate with groups engaged with diversity and international student issues in order to involve and engage diverse students with the work of the GPSA.

     ii.   Provide a forum to discuss diversity and inclusion within the graduate and professional student community.

   iii.   Host an annual meeting for groups representing diversity and international students.

   iv.   Present to the GPSA annually on its work supporting international students, Students of Color, gender equality and issues relating to LGBTQI students.

b. The GPSA should explore ways of increasing diversity within GPSA membership to encourage broad and meaningful participation in campus governance.

c. Hold monthly meetings of the GPSA standing committee chairs so that the GPSA can leverage skills and contacts of various committees to enhance communication, diversity, and engagement.

d. Increase communication between GPSA and all graduate and professional student organizations to facilitate increased engagement and GPSA presence on campus.

Objective 2: Increase the support structures for international students

Rationale:

International students make up a significant portion of Cornell's community: 44.1% of students in the Graduate School and 23.9% of students in the professional schools[5]. International students face unique challenges in their scholastic experience at Cornell University and often require mental health support services tailored to the international experience[6]. Key themes include different expectations for mental health support, the miscommunication about what counseling and wellness services are available for international students, and the incredible success tailoring mental health services to international students has had. Nationally, research has shown a higher incidence of mental health problems in international students who self report poor advisor-student relationships and greater challenges to obtaining and maintaining financial security.

Actions:

a. Expand professional development and careers resources for international students (see also Career Resources, Objective 2).

b. Increase support focused on the unique mental health needs of the international student population (see also Mental Health & Well-being, Objective 1f).

      i.   Collect data on the international student experience with regards to mental health and well-being in the Cornell community to understand the unique challenges of transit from abroad to the Ithaca campus.

     ii.   Identify ways to address the cultural and social adjustments faced by international students.

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5   http://www.isso.cornell.edu/about/stats12-13.pdf

6   Hyun, J., Quinn, B., Madon, T., & Lustig, S. (2007). Mental health need, awareness, and use of counseling services among international graduate students. *Journal of American College Health, 56,* 109–118.

c. Continue to increase access to resources, which address the unique language challenges of international students, particularly as they relate to coursework, teaching, and research.

d. Support programming for international students that focuses on money management and financial literacy, international job search challenges, and advisor-advisee relationships.

Objective 3: Expand support for diversity programming and Students of Color

Rationale:

An important issue brought up by the SOC community is the benefit of having a dedicated full-time diversity officer to provide support and coordinate activities that create a diverse community. For example, dedicated support in both the School of Engineering and the Johnson Business School currently fosters vibrant and diverse student communities. These focused efforts have increased the retention and enhanced the experience of diverse students in those programs. Furthermore, the four Students of Color organizations, listed in the Introduction above, all work with centers dedicated to students of the demographics that the four organizations serve. These centers are invaluable resources for all Cornell students. Through their educational and social programming, they help the Cornell and Ithaca community learn more about different cultures and backgrounds, which in turn helps to create a more inclusive community.

Furthermore, many graduate and professional students are the first members of their families to attend college. Unfamiliarity with higher education presents unique challenges to first generation students. Many Students of Color are also part of the first generation in their families to grow up in the United States. As such, Students of Color face specific challenges, both cultural and academic, during their time at Cornell, and it is critical to acknowledge these challenges and provide adequate support if we hope to create a truly diverse and inclusive graduate and professional student community.

The several bias incidents that have occurred in the past few years are indications that there is still progress to be made in creating a safe and supportive campus climate for all individuals. The University currently has an online system for reporting bias incidents. However, it is not well publicized among graduate and professional students. In addition, many graduate and professional students are not made aware of on-going social justice events and activities.

Actions:
a. Establish a diversity office and hire a diversity officer in every college at Cornell University.
b. Continue supporting centers for students with diverse backgrounds and identify opportunities to create similar centers for minority groups that currently lack such support.
c. Identify ways to better address the cultural and social adjustments faced by first generation graduate and professional students.
d. Increase communication to graduate and professional students regarding the bias reporting system and opportunities to get involve in social justice events and activities.

Objective 4: Increase focus on gender equality in graduate and professional education

Rationale:

Women in graduate and professional degrees are an important minority group at Cornell. The GPSA recognizes the unique challenges women face in navigating higher education. In the fall of 2012, the GPSA passed a resolution to support women's development[7]. This resolution called on the University administration to strengthen professional development and support for women in all graduate and professional programs. Acknowledging that women face different challenges in managing work-life balance, as well as broader societal expectations of career and family, the GPSA has asked the University to provide more programming addressing the needs of female graduate and professional students and to strengthen the linkages between women's groups across campus. The GPSA recognizes the steps that the administration has already taken in response to this resolution, but realizes there are areas in addition to professional development where women's inclusion and celebration is important.

Women at Cornell are a heterogeneous group, including women of color, international students, and students in traditionally male-dominated fields. In any sort of programming or action taken through the recommendations of this document, it is critical to understand the unique pressures women at Cornell may face. Although bias in the professional and academic world is becoming more widely recognized, there still are multiple areas where women may not be receiving full support. The GPSA hopes that the recommendations offered in this document will help administration think more critically about the specific needs and interests of graduate and professional student women.

Actions:

a. Strengthen professional development and support for women in all graduate and professional student programs (see also Career Resources).
b. Increase access to family services, since family commitments may particularly impact student access, academic progress and career advancement for graduate and professional student women (see also Family Services).
c. Strengthen connections between women's groups on campus (see also Sense of Community, Objective 2b).
d. Increase communications to graduate and professional students about current systems in place to address bias, sexual harassment, and assault.
e. Increase inclusion of graduate and professional student women in outreach programs.

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7   http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20121112R10

Objective 5: Increase support for the LGBTQI graduate and professional students

Rationale:

Cornell has a long history of supporting and advocating for the rights of LGBTQI students. In fact, it was the second university in the U.S. to form an LGBTQI student group. The LGBT Resource Center and five graduate student groups support a diverse range of speakers and social events for LGBTQI graduate and professional students. Despite this representation, LGBTQI and non-LGBTQI students could still benefit from more institutional support, education, and representation when it comes to issues of sexual identity and gender expression, particularly since many student services may impact LGBTQI students in unique ways. Issues of gender identity and sexual orientation span all populations of the campus community.

Many individuals in higher education support LGBTQI equality. Faculty and staff, however, are not always adequately trained to deal with diverse communities. To remedy this, any cultural-sensitivity training offered to staff, faculty, and students should include LGBTQI-related issues. By training the next generation of scholars and professionals to be more culturally aware, Cornell stands to not just influence its own campus, but the broader discourse. This is particularly important as individuals who identify as LGBTQI still face discrimination in the workforce, including within academia.

The suggestions presented below are by no means an exhaustive list, but should serve to begin a conversation surrounding LGBTQI graduate and professional students and solving problems related to perceived and realized discrimination based on sexual identity and gender expression here at Cornell.

Actions:

a. Increase inclusion of LGBTQI students in decision-making processes at Cornell, particularly with respect to health care services, health insurance coverage, resources for spouses and partners, and gender inclusive facilities.

b. Gather better data about possible matriculation barriers for LGBTQI students, possibly offering diversity-based fellowships.

c. Increase awareness and training focused on LGBTQI-related issues for graduate and professional students, staff, and faculty.

d. Continue to provide and better promote legal and mental health resources available to the LGBTQI community, especially legal resources for the transgender community as they can face unique legal issues involving gender identity.

Family Services

Introduction

Cornell must recognize and support the unique challenges that students with family responsibilities face in achieving their coursework, teaching, and research goals. According to a survey of a representative sample of students conducted by the GPSA, approximately 700 graduate and professional students have children[1]. Unfortunately, students are not eligible for many of the benefits available to staff and faculty through Cornell University Human Resources. Given their limited financial resources and substantial demands on their time, there is no doubt that student parents face substantial hardship that can hinder their academic progress. In addition, graduate and professional students occasionally deal with the challenge of caring for aging or ill parents.

In the recent Cornell University Strategic Plan[2], the University reaffirmed its commitment to the core principle of Student Access, specifically the goal of a university open and accessible to all who merit entrance. *Family services and the support structure for student parents and their partners is an issue of student access.* Graduate and professional students should not feel the need to choose

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1   Based on survey of a representative sample of students, approximately 10% of graduate and professional students have at least one child. GPSA Comprehensive Report on the 2011 Student Activity Fee-Funded Services Consumption Patterns Survey http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_gpsaf_report.pdf
2   Cornell University at its Sesquicentennial: A Strategic Plan 2010–2015 http://www.cornell.edu/strategicplan/docs/060410-strategic-plan-final.pdf

between attending Cornell and attending to the needs of their families. It should also be emphasized that improved family services and support would help to alleviate many stressors that affect students with families and lead to more positive long-term outcomes for both student parents and their children. A permanent commitment to addressing the needs of students with family responsibilities furthers the University's mission of creating a diverse and inclusive student community.

Objectives

Objective 1: Students should have access to information about resources for students with families

Rationale:

The biggest struggles for many graduate and professional student parents are time and money. As student parents new to Cornell or new to parenthood begin to seek out information about raising a family in Ithaca, they often become frustrated and overwhelmed. Students complain that information, both from campus and non-campus resources, is scattered, fragmented, and difficult to find. Improved access to information would save student parents valuable time and energy and allow students to make informed decisions for their family. Furthermore, improved access to information would go a long way toward making student parents feel as if they are supported by the University.

Actions:
   a. Appoint a single staff member to serve as the primary contact for student family services whose responsibilities include communicating with student parents and increasing access to information.
   b. Support a permanent network of staff and administrators who play a role in providing support services to students and their families with the aim of facilitating increased communication across administrative units.
   c. Improve data collection on students with families with the aim of increasing usage of and access to existing family services.
   d. Maintain an up-to-date and user-friendly website for students parents that provides the following:
      • A comprehensive informational resource that guides student parents through appropriate actions needed to raise a family in Ithaca and helps student parents to navigate available resources.
      • Accessible explanations of and links to relevant policies, including the graduate and professional student parental accommodation and student health insurance plan (SHIP) policies.
      • Information about child care options and the student Child Care Grant Program.
      • Information about the local or state assistance programs and fellowships for which

many graduate and professional students are likely to be eligible.

- A forum or discussion board that students can use to post and answer questions, as well as facilitate the creation of a support network for students and their families.

e. Increase access to information about emergency and contingency funds[3] by making department staff and faculty more aware of their availability so they can direct students in need to those resources.

f. Coordinate campus resources including staff, printed information, and websites with community family services from Tompkins County programs and local child care centers.

g. Integrate information for student parents into materials for admitted and new students.

Objective 2: Foster a supportive campus climate for graduate and professional students with families

Rationale:

A myriad of factors contribute to creating a culture that is welcoming to students with children and their partners. Currently, students with families and their partners indicate that they 'feel invisible' to the University, despite their relatively large numbers. The 2007 GCI called for the formalization of a university-wide policy on family leave for graduate students. In response, a graduate parental leave policy was instituted in 2008 and updated in Nov. 2011[4]. However, there continues to be variation across departments, staff, and faculty members in both awareness of the policy and how to appropriately accommodate student parents. In general, there are several areas where improvements could be made to remove the barriers that make life harder for students with families and to further the creation of an inclusive and family-friendly institutional culture.

Actions:

a. Encourage explicit discussion of the implementation of graduate and professional student parental accommodation policy within departments to increase general awareness of the needs of student parents and to foster a supportive and inclusive academic environment.

b. Increase awareness surrounding the scheduling needs of student parents, particularly with respect to the scheduling of courses, meetings, and research commitments during the evening and identifying more appropriately flexible funding sources, e.g. research versus teaching assistantships.

c. Create a final-year dissertation writing fellowship for Ph.D. students for whom teaching, family, and financial responsibilities are hindering progress towards successful completion of their dissertation.

d. Continue to support the family-friendly on-campus housing community at Hasbrouck Apartments, in particular:
    i. Strengthen support for family-oriented programming, and

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3 Report of the 2011 GPSA Ad-Hoc Committee to Investigate Graduate and Professional Student Emergency Funds http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_emergency_funds.pdf

4 University Policy 1.6, Graduate and Professional Student Parental Accommodation http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/cms/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/academic/upload/vol1_6.pdf

ii. Provide free, short-term guest parking on site, which would allow the frequent guests who provide critical support to the family community (such as babysitters, visiting parents, social workers, tutors, on-site medical personnel, ESL coaches) to park for free (see also Transportation, Objective 1b and Housing, Objective 1h).

e. Improve graduate and professional student awareness of and access to private lactation facilities on campus.

f. Extend to students access to short term mobility permit parking for parents in the late stages of pregnancy and reduced-rate temporary parking permits for breastfeeding mothers who need to leave the campus to breastfeed (see also Transportation, Objective 1f).

g. Increase training of health care staff at Gannett to improve preparedness to provide helpful information for student parents and students interested in starting a family, particularly with regards to family planning, pregnancy, delivery, and pediatric care.

Objective 3: Graduate and professional students should have access to affordable child care options

Rationale:

Access to child care is a major concern for many parents. As the 2007 GCI noted, child care expenses can be particularly prohibitive for student parents, and yet time away from coursework, research, and teaching commitments hinders academic progress. The cost of child care at Cornell's Bright Horizons Childcare Center[5], which is conveniently located on campus, is far beyond the budget of the majority of graduate & professional students. The 2007 GCI recommended instituting a sliding scale for child care service payments and ensuring that relevant grants keep pace with expenses. However, the only financial assistance currently available to cover child care expenses is the student Child Care Grant Program. In the 2012–2013 school year, students could apply for a maximum taxable grant subsidy of $1,893 per child, whereas staff and faculty were eligible for a child care tax-free subsidy grant of up to $5,000. Given the current fee structure at Bright Horizons, the maximum student child care grant subsidy only covers 1.3 months of full-time infant child care[6]. Thus, graduate and professional students have little choice but to seek out alternative child care options, which are often significantly less convenient. It should be noted that child care far away from the mother's place of work places a particular burden on nursing mothers, since it is recommended that they be able to breastfeed several times a day. Thus, there continues to be substantial demand for high-quality, affordable and convenient child care options for student parents.

Actions:

a. Support and expand the student Child Care Grant Program.

b. Implement and advertise a rolling or monthly deadline for child care grant applications.

c. Consider a Family Support Grant Program that would be based on family financial need, rather than the student or employment status of the parents, alternatively, or in addition to, the Child Care Grant Program.

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5 Bright Horizons Childcare Center website: http://child-care-preschool.brighthorizons.com/ny/ithaca/cornell

6 Information on Bright Horizons rates as of August 2012: https://www.hr.cornell.edu/life/support/c4_rates.pdf

d. Improve access to high-quality child care options that are both affordable and convenient.
   i. Support and promote convenient community-based child care programs, such as child care cooperatives with a core professional staff and parent volunteers for support.
   ii. Cornell Bright Horizons Childcare Center should consider ways to increase affordability and access for graduate & professional students.

Objective 4: Provide support for and inclusion of student partners and spouses

Rationale:

Cornell should recognize that supporting the partners and families of students is supporting students. Financial and emotional struggles put an incredible stress on students and their families, which ultimately affects students' abilities to achieve their academic and research goals. Student partners often perform a substantial portion of child care and domestic responsibilities. However, the unfortunate reality is that student partners often experience incredible stress and isolation as their partners pursue a degree at Cornell. Student partners report experiencing emotional distress, stemming from a lack of support, a sense of isolation, a loss of identity, and significant financial worries. This can be especially true for international student partners, who experience additional cultural, legal, and language barriers to meaningfully integrating into the local community.

Actions:
   a. Identify ways to increase inclusion of student partners in the campus community, such as extending invitations to student partners and their children to participate in on-campus events, reduced-rate access to the Extramural Study program for student partners, and continued access to spouse ID cards.
   b. Include student partners in targeted orientation events (see also Sense of Community, Objective 2c).
   c. Continue to support programming and initiatives that allow student parents and their partners to find local support networks (see also Sense of Community, Objective 2).
   d. Expand career service offerings for graduate and professional student partners, including increasing access to information about acquiring permanent or temporary employment at Cornell (see also Career Resources, Objective 2c).
   e. Increase access to mental health resources for student partners, including individual and relationship counseling services (see also Mental Health & Well-being, Objective 1d).

Housing

Introduction

For any graduate or professional student who attends Cornell, housing is an important factor in life at the university. Ithaca and the surrounding communities have complex rental markets with expensive and inexpensive living spaces of varying quality for graduate and professional students finding housing. A number of decisions are involved in selecting housing, for example: cost, location, transportation, children, and stipends. Various other issues are intertwined with housing including transportation, family services, and international status.

Cornell currently operates four on-campus housing options: Hasbrouck Apartments, Maplewood Park Apartments, Hughes Hall, and Thurston Court. Hasbrouck is a complex of 338 units housing single students as well as families. Maplewood contains 394 furnished units, mostly rooms within 3- or 4-bedroom apartments. Hughes Hall is for first-year law students only, but will be closing soon, leaving around 50 residents to find another living arrangement. Thurston Court is a small complex for around 20 residents. Altogether, these housing options serve approximately 12% of graduate and professional students. For many graduate and professional students, having Cornell as a landlord offers a sense of security and certainty about housing.

Maplewood and Hasbrouck are the primary focus of the on-campus housing part of this topic area. In Maplewood and Hasbrouck most units are leased to graduate or professional students, but a few nontraditional undergraduates

and visiting scholars live in the complexes as well. Hasbrouck is known as an attractive place for families, particularly international student families, because of the sense of community and the availability of programming for graduate and professional students with children. Many international students are able to more easily find housing in Maplewood rather than struggle with the difficulty of finding housing in the community while still located in a foreign country. However, the buildings in Maplewood residences are well past expected lifetimes and are slated to be shut down in the coming years. Maplewood is currently without a replacement plan.

A wealth of housing options exists for the 88% of graduate and professional students who do not live on campus. While most graduate and professional students live in the city of Ithaca, the village of Cayuga Heights, the town of Ithaca, and the town of Lansing, some do live further away in Tompkins County or the surrounding counties. The high cost of housing in Tompkins County presents challenges to graduate and professional students who live on either a fixed stipend or substantial loans. Many graduate and professional students also are looking to find a quieter living atmosphere separate from where most undergraduate students choose to live. The resources available to help graduate and professional students choose appropriate places to live are limited. The campus resources that are available are high quality, but underutilized. The Office of Fraternities, Sororities, and Independent Living has an Off-Campus Housing Office that helps all students, undergraduate and graduate and professional with living off-campus. Departments, fields, or colleges sometimes additionally offer housing resources.

Objectives

Objective 1: Provide an adequate supply of university housing that meets the needs of graduate and professional students

Rationale:

University-run housing offers an option for graduate and professional students who might be looking for a high-quality community of similar individuals or for certainty in housing contracts, maintenance, or other landlord-tenant issues. Graduate and professional students who come to Cornell with a family or plan to start a family while at the University find family-friendly housing in Hasbrouck as a reliable and useful option. For many international students who may not be familiar with renting in the United States, university-run housing provides a way to obtain housing without having to navigate the American rental housing market. However, a number of issues remain with university-run housing including affordability, parking, proximity to amenities, and other issues that graduate and professional students have identified. President Skorton, speaking at the Hasbrouck pre-semester open house, emphasized that he places importance on having quality housing for graduate students. The GPSA agrees with President Skorton and these actions will help to make graduate and professional student housing better.

Actions:

    a. Reprioritize on-campus housing allocations to give preference to international students with families and domestic students with families.

    b. Continue to offer family-focused and family-friendly housing at Hasbrouck.

    c. Continue regular facilities upgrades to better meet the needs of student families including additional unit space, more outdoor recreation equipment, and quality community space.

    d. Work with Transportation Services to drastically reduce the cost of parking for residents at Hasbrouck and Maplewood and to provide free parking for visitors (See also Family Services, Objective 2d).

    e. The Maplewood replacement should offer resources similar to those offered by the current complex, including quality service, competitive rent, and community events that celebrate the diversity of residents.

    f. Consult graduate and professional students who currently live, or have previously lived, in Maplewood in the discussions regarding the replacement of the complex.

    g. Continue to invest in improvements and maintenance at Maplewood up until the complex is ready for replacement.

    h. Work to attract an Ithaca CarShare location at Hasbrouck.

    i. Develop input sessions, to be held at least once a year, for residents and work with the GPSA to continue to improve housing.

Objective 2: Provide support to graduate and professional students who choose to live off-campus

Rationale:

Currently graduate and professional students who live off campus can receive support from the Off-Campus Housing Office (OCHO) within the Office of Fraternities, Sororities, and Independent Living. The office is understaffed, with only two full-time staff members, who also have to support undergraduate students. This office serves graduate and professional students in an advisory role that includes lease assistance, choosing an appropriate neighborhood, landlord relationships, and other aspects of renting housing in the region. Additionally, because graduate students in particular may be in the Ithaca area for a number of years, homeownership could make financial sense to some students and a small number of graduate students do own homes. The office's resources are helpful to graduate and professional students as they navigate the rental market in Ithaca.

Actions:

    a. Allocate additional resources to support the efforts of OCHO, including additional staff and outreach resources, and increase the focus on graduate and professional students.

    b. Integrate off-campus housing resources better into the acceptance letters and the new-student and orientation processes.

    c. Prominently display off-campus housing resources at newstudents.cornell.edu.

d. Develop better neighborhood resources for choosing an apartment location that, based on available data, includes:
    - Candid neighborhood description (including topographical descriptions),
    - Percent of graduate students in neighborhood,
    - Average rent,
    - Reasonable distance from campus, and
    - Connection with public transportation.
e. Develop resources or link to resources for homeownership in Ithaca.
f. Improve the Cornell-run rental property listing site to be able to include photographs of properties.
g. Feature "tenants' rights" prominently on the off-campus housing site.
h. Provide departments, colleges, and the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO), the places where most graduate and professional students find advice on housing, with appropriate housing resources.
i. Consider setting up or supporting a student initiative to create or join a "rank-my-landlord" website to help students make better choices about picking an apartment or house.
j. Help departments create, when needed, a system whereby newly-admitted students can visit sample rental properties.

Objective 3: Help create a better community for graduate and professional students living off campus

Rationale:

Cornell has an obligation to provide quality on-campus housing for students and the University houses around 12% of graduate and professional students every year (see also Housing Objective 1). The other 88% of graduate and professional students live in the city of Ithaca or the surrounding towns and villages. Cornell should consider part of its mission to improve the communities in which the majority of graduate and professional students live. The Office of the University Planner works with various community partners in planning and implementing housing projects in the community. Additionally, the University's Office of Government and Community Relations has a mission to "represent Cornell to the community, and just as importantly, the community to Cornell." The Community Relations section of the Office deals with the intertwined nature of Cornell students and staff who work and study at the university and live in the community. The GPSA has also begun to work more closely with community partners more to get the graduate and professional student perspective into the community.

Actions:
a. The Office of Community Relations should add to their priority list for interactions with the community: help improve housing for graduate and professional students in Tompkins County both in terms of affordability and quality.

b. Engage graduate and professional students in opportunities to become involved in community groups like the Rental Housing Advisory Commission, the Collegetown Neighborhood Council, neighborhood associations, and other community groups that address issues in housing.
c. The GPSA should work with community groups both separately and in collaboration with the Office of Community Relations and the Office of the University Planner to improve the affordability and quality of housing in the community.
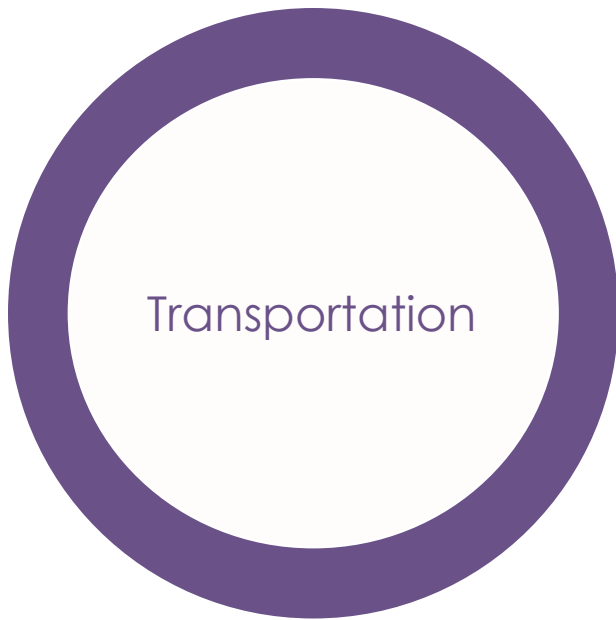
Transportation

Introduction

Graduate and professional students have unique transportation needs. Many graduate and professional students live further away from campus than undergraduates because rent is cheaper and thus commute longer distances to campus. Graduate and professional students have a number of transportation options: walking, biking, public transit, and driving. Students can purchase various types of Cornell parking permits for up to $725.76 per year, as of academic year 2012–2013. In their first year, students receive a free OmniRide bus pass for TCAT (Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit) and in subsequent years can purchase OmniRides for $200 per year. Students, regardless of whether they have purchased a pass, can ride the bus for free after 6:00pm on weekdays and all day on weekends. Additionally, graduate and professional students who live on campus and want to park at their residence must purchase a $725.76 per year parking pass.

According to research conducted by the GPSA, approximately 53% of graduate and professional students have an OmniRide pass (either through purchasing one or receiving one free by being a new student), 13% have purchased a parking pass, and 34% have not purchased either OmniRide or a parking pass[1]. While some individuals who have a free pass may not take public transit and some who do not purchase a pass may simply pay cash on transit, it is clear

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1   Data provided by University Registrar and Transportation and Mail Services.

that public transportation is an important component to commuting for graduate and professional students.

The diversity of graduate and professional students means that the university should not assign transportation policies, prices, and programs with a broad stroke. There are some communities of graduate and professional students who have particular transportation needs that should be considered. Some graduate students have relationships with the university and their program that are similar to employees while other graduate and professional students are more like students in the undergraduate sense.

Professional students in the College of Veterinary Medicine have particular transportation challenges due to the demands of their program. In a particular year, veterinary students are required to be on call and, thus, must purchase parking passes to be able to attend calls when needed. The vast majority (81%) of vet students have purchased a parking pass, likely at the rate of $725.76 per year. Additionally, graduate and professional students who live on campus and bring a car must pay the full $725.76 per year fee, even if that car is used simply for running errands and not driving to an academic building. Graduate students who work late in labs, or who have demanding or irregular lab schedules, have limited public transportation options at certain times of the day and may be best served by purchasing a parking pass.

The 2007 Graduate Community Initiative called for more flexible parking options and better hours for public transportation. Some of those recommendations have been implemented and a variety of flexible parking options now exist for graduate and professional students. Short-term parking permits can be purchased (albeit at higher rates per day), an occasional-parker program exists, OmniRide can be purchased by spouses, and the first year of OmniRide is free. These are commendable advances in flexibility, but the GPSA thinks that even more can be done to achieve the following objectives.

Objectives

Objective 1: Graduate and professional students should have reasonable, fair, and equitable parking options

Rationale:

For the 34% of graduate and professional students who purchase parking passes, commuting to campus or to their residence by car is important. Choosing to drive a car instead of taking public transit may occur for a number of reasons including preference, housing location, lab or research demands, or resident status on campus. Graduate and professional students should have access to reasonably priced, fairly distributed, and equitable parking options. For a graduate student on a minimal stipend, $725.76 per year can be a substantial annual cost. For a graduate or professional student taking nearly $100,000 in loans, $725.76 for parking simply adds to the debt burden. While the GPSA understands that providing parking is an expensive endeavor, we call on the university to consider the impact of that cost on graduate and professional students. While the GPSA also

understands that taking public transportation, walking, or biking are all more environmentally-responsible alternatives to driving, we recognize the importance of driving to many graduate and professional students.

Actions:

a. Graduate and professional student residents at Maplewood, Hasbrouck, and Thurston Court should be charged a lower fee for a "residential" type parking permit, and that fee should be negotiated with input from GPSA and residents.
b. Free parking should be available throughout the day for service providers to residents at Maplewood, Hasbrouck, and Thurston Court including babysitters, social workers, tutors, prenatal visit nurses, parents, and others.
c. Professional students at the College of Veterinary Medicine should have a much lower parking pass rate given the on-call requirements of their program.
d. Graduate students with demanding and rigorous lab schedules should be considered when reviewing parking options.
e. RideShare should be offered with the same incentives to graduate and professional students as are offered to faculty and staff.
f. Gannett, Transportation Services, and/or Student Disability Services should inform students who temporarily have limited mobility whether due to injury or pregnancy about Cornell's parking and transportation options for students with mobility issues including CUlift and handicap parking (See also Family Services, Objective 2e).
g. Make available short-term handicap parking permits for graduate and professional students in any parking lot where such passes are available for faculty and staff.
h. Consider opening additional parking lots for evening parking without a permit that are near where graduate and professional students spend time researching or working.

Objective 2: Graduate and professional students should have access to high quality public transportation

Rationale:

Public transportation is important to graduate and professional students. Over 50% of graduate and professional students have access to an OmniRide bus pass and every graduate and professional student can ride for free after 6:00pm on weekdays. Almost 70% of ridership of TCAT is from riders with Cornell passes[2]. While the ridership statistics cannot be easily broken down between undergraduate and graduate and professional students, graduate and professional students who live farther away are clearly one of the largest user groups for TCAT. Further, since the university negotiates a contract for OmniRide passes, the university should keep in mind the needs of graduate and professional students when negotiating that contract and the prices that will have to be charged to students.

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2   TCAT 2011 Yearbook: http://www.tcatbus.com/files/all/2011_yearbook.pdf

Actions:

    a. Appoint a qualified graduate or professional student who is a TCAT rider to always fill one of the three allocated positions for Cornell on the TCAT Board of Directors.

    b. TCAT, Cornell Transportation Services, and the Office of the University Planner should actively work with the GPSA on planning routes that best serve graduate and professional students, including late-night service and service to areas with high graduate and professional resident concentration (see also Mental Health and Well-being objective 2a and 2e).

    c. Work with the GPSA on identifying underserved, yet highly-concentrated areas of the county with graduate and professional students.

    d. Consider using the GPS Activity Fee to give all graduate and professional students an OmniRide pass.

    e. Create a better and more usable TCAT trip planner.

    f. Provide more resources during orientations, the new students process, and across campus on TCAT routes, including maps, route descriptions, and resources for additional information.

    g. TCAT should develop a mobile transit app or provide information for the collaborative development of a mobile transit app, such as with a class of students at Cornell or a thesis project.

    h. Work with graduate and professional students on the siting and implementation of park-and-ride either on campus or in the community.

    i. Consider providing free OmniRide access to graduate and professional students before 8:00am during weekdays.

    j. Consider increasing the capacity of TCAT buses to carry bicycles.

Sense of Community

Introduction

One of the primary recommendations of the 2007 GCI was that "Cornell explore options for integrating the graduate and professional student experience," by expanding opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration and student development. Cornell can and should support the development of a diverse and vibrant intellectual community on campus. Graduate and professional students should be encouraged to be well-rounded and engaged with the Cornell community, as well as with broader local and global communities. *Engaged and active students are not only better scholars, but better citizens of the world.* As was stated in the 2007 GCI, integrating the diverse and intellectually-engaged community of graduate and professional students into the wider whole at Cornell would energize our campus. The challenges of building such an integrated community are multifaceted and complex, and touch on many different aspects of the graduate and professional student experience.

There are two possible ways to look at the benefits of supporting the development of a stronger sense of community. The first is that increasing the social connectedness between students, by encouraging students to achieve balance in their lives, can serve as an important means to improve mental health and well-being of graduate and professional students. A second approach recognizes a major opportunity for the academic mission of Cornell University: an engaged interdisciplinary community can serve as a platform for the open-minded and interdisciplinary exchange of ideas and, ultimately, collaboration.

Interdisciplinary collaboration is one of the best indicators of a healthy academic and intellectual environment at a university. Cornell University's Strategic Plan emphasized the importance of "connectivity" across diverse colleges, schools, and programs by "developing new integrations, boundary-crossing structures, and productive synergies"[1]. Graduate students themselves are very often the intellectual links that cross between departments and labs, benefiting from the flexible committee structure at Cornell to work on innovative and interdisciplinary research projects. However, program requirements vary, and graduate and professional students are not always encouraged to participate in activities or research projects outside of their fields or departments. In extreme cases, the demands of coursework, research, and teaching commitments can mean that students are unsupported in, and sometimes explicitly discouraged from, participating in activities that may serve to develop their intellectual or personal breadth.

The reality is that the personal and professional benefits of an integrated and engaged community are not independent of one another. Fostering connections between graduate and professional students across schools and fields promotes not only lasting friendships, but also professional and academic relationships. Furthermore, graduate and professional student alumni who strongly identify with their experience at Cornell could prove to be generous donors to the University. Indeed, international graduate and professional students, who are less likely to have strong allegiances to their undergraduate institution, are an untapped source of engaged alumni. Thus, a strategic approach to the development of the graduate and professional community on campus continues to represent a significant opportunity.

Objectives

Objective 1: Improve opportunities for meaningful interactions and interdisciplinary collaboration across the broad graduate and professional student community

Rationale:

Students consistently indicate that their most meaningful relationships developed from interactions that required them to work together with others in some capacity, whether it was on an assignment in a course, on a research project, or as members of a team[2]. Ice breakers, networking and casual social events are important, but following up with people met in these superficial interactions can be difficult and awkward. Finding creative ways to facilitate meaningful interactions across the graduate and professional student community would lay the foundation for the formation of strong and meaningful personal and professional relationships.

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1   http://www.cornell.edu/strategicplan/docs/060410-strategic-plan-final.pdf

2   Student Advocacy Town Hall (November 15, 2012) http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_town_hall_report.pdf

Actions:

   a. Increase opportunities, through coursework and programming, for graduate and professional students to use their unique skills and interests to work collaboratively on interdisciplinary academic, professional, and outreach endeavors.

   b. Identify ways to incentivize students and faculty to develop novel and innovative partnerships and collaborations.

   c. Market existing service and outreach programs, such as the Center for Community Engaged Learning & Research, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Cornell Public Service Center, to appeal to graduate and professional students (see also Objective 3).

   d. Increase opportunities for research graduate students to present their work to a wide audience in a casual setting, such as TED-style talks[3] or Nerd Nite[4].

   e. Increase inclusiveness across diverse communities within the graduate and professional student population (see also Diversity and International Students).

Objective 2: Support programming, events, and activities that encourage social cohesion, connectedness, and communication

Rationale:

In recent years, there has been a marked improvement in the development of and communication about graduate and professional student-focused social programming. The creation of Graduate and Professional Student Programming Board (GPSPB) as a GPS Activity Fee Byline Funded organization[5] has also led to an increase in the ability of graduate and professional students to develop social and wellness programming for the broad community. During the 2012–2014 funding cycle, the GPSPB received $2.00 per student—a substantial increase in budget from previous years, when the organization was a committee of the GPSA. Furthermore, in spring 2012, the GPSA accomplished a long-standing goal: the ability to email all students on an opt-out basis. The first edition of the GPSA Buzz, a well-written and high quality newsletter, was emailed to 6,000+ students on February 19, 2012. However, there remains substantial room for improvement. Many students are still unaware of the various events occurring on campus, and graduate and professional students still lack a coherent sense of community identity[6].

Actions:

   a. Continue to improve communication about on-going programming and events, including improvements to the Cornell Events Calendar (see also Mental Health & Well-being, Objective 4b).

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3 http://www.ted.com/

4 Nerd Nite is a casual lecture event. Individuals give 20 minute fun-yet-informative presentations across all disciplines—while the audience drinks along. http://nerdnite.com/

5 http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/20110418R9

6 Student Advocacy Town Hall (November 15, 2012) http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130304_gci_town_hall_report.pdf; Dine & Discuss - Sense of Community (February 27, 2013) http://assembly.cornell.edu/uploads/GPSA/20130328_gci_dine_and_discuss_2013.pdf

b. Improve communication among student organizations and between departments on campus, encouraging broad participation and co-sponsorship of events.

c. Improve communication and connection between the Ithaca campus and other Cornell campuses.

d. Include a graduate student organization fair as part of orientation programming to increase awareness about the many student efforts on campus (see also Mental Health & Well-being, Objective 4a).

e. Enhance operations at the Big Red Barn to focus on better serving the needs of the graduate and professional student community (see also Graduate and Professional Student Center, Objectives 1 and 2).

f. Identify ways to assess the 'connectedness' of the graduate and professional student community as a way to measure progress (see also Mental Health & Well-being, Objective 4d).

g. In the design and construction of the replacement for the Maplewood Housing complex, consider ways to create a vibrant scholarly residential community, emphasizing community spaces (see also Housing, Objective 1a & 1b).

h. Consider organizing a second orientation for students who matriculate in spring semester.

Objective 3: Support and encourage personal development and growth

Rationale:

Graduate and professional students sometimes struggle to find a balance in their lives. When coursework, research, and teaching commitments become stressful, it can be all too easy to feel guilty about taking time for oneself and to sacrifice activities like exercise, hobbies, community engagement, and socializing in order to be more 'productive'. However, it is exactly these activities that can help to combat stress, provide an emotional release from intense academic activities, and allow students to renew their energy and interest in their academic work.

Learning to how to balance professional and academic commitments with a happy and healthy personal life should be considered a critical part of graduate and professional student education. However, candid advice about work-life balance and how to have a life outside of coursework, research and teaching is not always forthcoming from advisors and faculty members. A mentor can provide a critical source of honest advice, which may help students to find a healthy balance in their personal and professional lives. Furthermore, Cornell should consider ways to foster an academic climate that is supportive of involved and engaged students.

Actions:

a. Develop supportive mentorship networks, such as:
   - Peer-to-peer networks among different cohorts of graduate and professional students,
   - Between graduate and professional students and alumni,
   - Between graduate and professional students and undergraduates, and

- Between graduate and professional students and faculty.
b. Reward and recognize students for outstanding commitment to community engagement and service.
    i. Support university-wide awards for outstanding artistic or athletic achievement, public engagement and outreach, campus leadership, teaching, etc.
    ii. Encourage fields to recognize extraordinary commitment to intellectual and personal breadth.
c. Encourage faculty to have supportive conversations with students about work-life balance, outreach, and personal growth and development.

Objective 4: Improve integration and communication across departments and units

Rationale:

Cornell University's Strategic Plan called for the development of "stronger connections across colleges to enhance educational opportunities for students." This needs to be felt on the graduate and professional student level, with better integration of information about seminars, workshops, and courses that would be of interest to students in a wide variety of fields. In addition, more can be done to involve graduate and professional students in such efforts, empowering students to take an active role in their education, and providing unique professional development opportunities. The following recommendations are intended primarily for academic units, recognizing the critical role of departments and faculty in making Objective 1 more feasible.

Actions:
a. Increase faculty and departmental support for active graduate and professional student involvement in developing cross-disciplinary programming, such as journal clubs, interdisciplinary events and conferences, and cross-departmental social functions.
b. Support departmental efforts to maintain user-friendly and updated websites and calendars to advertise seminar schedules, courses, and faculty expertise.
c. Improve opportunities within departments for graduate and professional students to interact with faculty, including visiting speakers.
d. Support efforts to centralize information about faculty expertise and on-going research across Cornell, such as VIVO[7].
e. Generate easy ways for individuals across campus to sign up to receive emails about events going on across campus that may be of interest to them.

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7   http://vivo.cornell.edu/

Appendix A: Resolution 14

Cornell University — Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Resolution 14: A Resolution to Adopt the Graduate and Professional Community Initiative

WHEREAS, the GPSA in 2006–2007 created the Graduate Community Initiative (2007 GCI) to elevate the discussion around graduate and professional students on campus; and

WHEREAS, the GPSA in 2012–2013 passed Resolution 1 calling for the creation of an Ad Hoc Committee to review and update the 2007 GCI; and

WHEREAS, the Ad Hoc Committee has evaluated the 2007 GCI, reviewed the progress made since 2007, identified eight major topic areas to focus on, and drafted a full document entitled "Graduate and Professional Community Initiative: A Strategic Plan for the Graduate and Professional Student Community"; and

WHEREAS, in order to understand the needs of graduate and professional students, the Ad Hoc Committee reached out to the graduate and professional student community by organizing a series of focus groups, participating in various meetings with university administrators and community stakeholders, working with student organizations, and engaging in extensive discussions during GPSA meetings throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, the GPSA Student Advocacy Committee organized two major events to solicit input on the Graduate and Professional Community Initiative topic areas: the Fall Town Hall on November 15, 2012 and the spring Dine & Discuss on February 27, 2013; and

WHEREAS, having a strategic plan for the graduate and professional student community that is developed collaboratively and comprehensively addresses issues will help the GPSA better advocate for the needs of our community; and

WHEREAS, the university administration and community stakeholders can use this document to better understand the needs of all graduate and professional students and to adopt the recommendations in collaboration with GPSA for a better campus community; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the GPSA adopts the attached Graduate and Professional Community Initiative as the five-year strategic plan for GPSA and the graduate and professional community; and

RESOLVED, that the GCI Ad Hoc Committee will write an Executive Summary and supplementary appendix to be included in the final document; and

RESOLVED, that the GCI Ad Hoc Committee will design a professional final product for printing and online distribution; and

RESOLVED, that this Resolution and the Graduate and Professional Community Initiative be sent to *David Skorton*, President; *Robert Harrison*, Chair of Board of Trustees; *Kent Hubbell*, Dean of Students; *Susan H. Murphy*, Vice President for Student and Academic Services; *Kent Fuchs*, Provost; *Barbara Knuth*, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School; *Jan Allen*, Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs; *Janna Lamey*, Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Life; *Sheri Notaro*, Associate Dean for Inclusion and Professional Development; *Tilman Baumstark*, Assistant Dean for Professional Development; *Anne Poduska*, Graduate and International Career Advisor; *Kris Corda*, Director of the Big Red Barn; *Julie Paige*, Assistant Dean of Students; *Peggy Beach*, Director of the Office of Assemblies; *Stewart J. Schwab*, the Allan R. Tessler Dean, Cornell Law School; *Michael Kotlikoff*, Austin O. Hooey Dean of Veterinary Medicine; *Soumitra Dutta*, Anne and Elmer Lindseth Dean of the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management; *Joseph Burns*, Dean of Faculty; *Kathryn Boor*, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Science; *Kent Kleinman*, Dean of the College of Architecture, Art and Planning; *G. Peter Lepage*, The Harold Tanner Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; *Lance Collins*, Dean of the College of Engineering; *Michael Johnson*, Dean of the School of Hotel Administration; *Alan Mathios*, Dean of the College of Human Ecology; *Harry Katz*, Dean of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations; *Brendan O'Brien*, Director of ISSO; *Janet Corson-Rikert*, Executive Director of Gannett Health Services; *Greg Eells*, Associate Director of Gannett and Director of Counseling and Psychological Services; *Marty Rauker*, Assistance Vice President for Student and Academic Services; *Robert Burhman*, Senior Vice Provost for Research; *Stephen Johnson*, Vice President for Government and Community Relations; *KyuJung Whang*, Vice President for Facilities Services; *A.T. Miller*, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Diversity Initiatives; *Joe Turcotte*, General Manager of TCAT; *Svante Myrick*, Mayor of Ithaca; all DGS's; and staff in each listed office.

Respectfully submitted,
Mitch Paine
GPSA President

Nicole M. Baran
GPSA Executive Vice President

Evan Cortens
Counsel to the GPSA

Matt Holden
GPSA Physical Sciences Voting Member

Yevgeniy Izrayelit
GPSA Student Advocacy Committee Chair

Monet Dumas
GPSA Johnson School of Graduate Management Voting Member

Darrick T. N. Evensen
Graduate Student-Elected Trustee

Maximillian Chen
Member, GCI Ad Hoc Committee, President of the Society for Asian American Graduate Affairs (SAAGA)

Chelsea Morris
GPSA Biological and Environmental Engineering Field Representative

Passed unanimously, March 25, 2013

Appendix B: Sources of Input

Graduate & Professional Student Center

Sources of Input:
- GPSA Town Hall Meeting (Nov. 15, 2012)
- Dine & Discuss - Sense of Community (Feb. 27, 2013)

Primary authors:
- Nicole M. Baran, GPSA Executive Vice President, Social Sciences Voting Member

Substantial input provided by:
- Kris Corda, Manager of the Big Red Barn
- Jan Allen, Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs
- Barb Knuth, Dean, Graduate School
- Kent Hubbell, Dean of Students
- Evan Cortens, Counsel to the GPSA
- Matthew H. Holden, GPSA Physical Sciences Voting Member

Career Resources

Sources of Input:
- GPSA Town Hall Meeting (Nov. 15, 2012)

Primary authors:
- Evan Cortens, Counsel to the GPSA

Substantial input provided by:
- Matthew H. Holden, GPSA Physical Sciences Voting Member
- Mitch Paine, GPSA President
- Anne Poduska, Graduate and International Career Advisor
- Sheri Notaro, Associate Dean for Inclusion and Professional Development
- Jan Allen, Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs
- Tilman Baumstark, Assistant Dean for Professional Development

Mental Health & Well-being

Sources of Input:
- GPSA Town Hall Meeting (Nov. 15, 2012)

- Dine & Discuss - Mental Health (Sep. 26, 2011)
- GPSA Meeting with Greg Eells, Director of CAPS (Jan. 21, 2013)

Primary authors:
- Matthew H. Holden, GPSA Physical Sciences Voting Member
- Yevgeniy Izrayelit, Chair of the GPSA Student Advocacy Committee

Substantial input provided by:
- Jen A. Gudaz, Noyes Recreation Center Director
- Tish Tipping, Director of Cornell Fitness Centers, and Associate Director of Campus Recreation
- Mitch Paine, GPSA President
- Nicole M. Baran, GPSA Executive Vice President, Social Sciences Voting Member
- Evan Cortens, Counsel to the GPSA

Diversity & International Students

Sources of Input:
- Meeting with Associate Dean for Inclusion and Professional Development at Cornell University (Feb. 11, 2013)
- Meeting with Nsombi Ricketts, Senior Director at the Johnson Office of Diversity and Inclusion (Feb. 20, 2013)
- Meeting with Black Graduate and Professional Student Association (BGPSA) (Feb. 28, 2013)
- Graduate Student Town Hall on Diversity (Mar, 6, 2013)
- Meeting with director of ISSO, Cornell University
- Dine & Discuss: Sense of Community (Feb. 27, 2013)

Primary authors:
- Yevgeniy Izrayelit, Chair of the GPSA Student Advocacy Committee
- Maximillian Chen, President of the Society for Asian American Graduate Affairs (SAAGA)
- Keenan Valentine, Vice President and Former President of SAAGA
- Chavez Carter, President of the Black Graduate and Professional Student Association (BGPSA)
- Monet Dumas, Johnson School of Graduate Management Voting Member, GPSA
- Triveni Gandhi, Humanities Voting Member, GPSA
- Brandon Kraft, graduate student

Substantial input provided by:
- Matthew H. Holden, GPSA Physical Sciences Voting Member
- Amy Cochran, graduate student
- Nicole M. Baran, GPSA Executive Vice President, Social Sciences Voting Member

Family Services

Housing

- Off-campus housing
  - Denise Thompson, Administrative Assistant, Dean of Students' Office of Fraternity, Sorority, and Independent Living

Primary authors:
- Mitch Paine, GPSA President
- Evan Cortens, Counsel to the GPSA

Substantial input provided by:
- Marty Rauker, Director, Campus Life Enterprise Services
- Leslie Sadler Meyerhoff, Associate Director of Academic Initiatives, Campus Life Enterprise Services
- Julie Paige, Assistant Dean of Students
- Denise Thompson, Administrative Assistant, Dean of Students' Office of Fraternity, Sorority, and Independent Living
- Mina Amundsen, University Planner
- Barnaby Knoll, Residence Hall Director of Schuyler House
- Linda Majani, Graduate Residence Manager, Hasbrouck/Thurston Court & Hughes
- Gary Stewart, Director, Office of Community Relations
- John Gutenberger, Senior Director, Office of Community Relations
- Chelsea Morris, GPSA Biological and Environmental Engineering Field Representative

Transportation

Sources of Input:
- GPSA Break Out Session (Nov. 12, 2012)
  - Cornell University Transportation & Mail Services
    - Joe Lalley III, Director of Facilities Operations, Facilities Services
    - Helen Steh, Commuter Programs Administrator, Transportation & Mail Services
    - Amy Ross, Manager of Parking Systems and Communications, Transportation and Mail Services
  - Tompkins Area Consolidated Transit (TCAT)
    - Doug Swarts, Service Development Manager, TCAT
    - Patty Poist, Communications and Marketing Manager, TCAT
- Focus groups on housing, with transportation recommendations:
  - Hasbrouck focus group (Jan. 22, 2013)
  - Maplewood focus group (Jan. 28, 2013)
  - Off-campus focus group (Jan. 31, 2013)

Primary authors:
- Mitch Paine, GPSA President

Substantial input provided by:
- Tanya Husick, Senior Transportation Planner, Office of the University Planner
- Julie Paige, Assistant Dean of Students
- Doug Swarts, Service Development Manager, TCAT
- Patty Poist, Communications and Marketing Manager, TCAT
- Nancy Oltz, Operations Manager, TCAT
- Matthew H. Holden, GPSA Physical Sciences Voting Member
- Darrick T. N. Evensen, Student-elected Trustee

Sense of Community

Sources of Input:
- GPSA Town Hall Meeting (Nov. 15, 2012)
- Dine & Discuss - Sense of Community (Feb. 27, 2013)

Primary authors:
- Nicole M. Baran, GPSA Executive Vice President, Social Sciences Voting Member

Substantial input provided by:
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- Evan Cortens, Counsel to the GPSA

Special Thanks To:

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- Victoria Long

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Appendix C: The Members

GCI Update Committee

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Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, Academic Year 2012–2013

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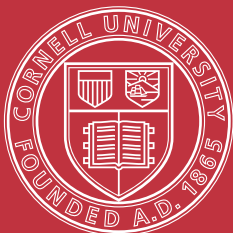Evan Cortens, Counsel

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Matthew Holden, Physical Sciences
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Hahn Liu, Law School
Alexander Moore, Physical Sciences
Robert Moore, Masters (Engineering)
Elizabeth Newbury, Social Sciences
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Eric Rager, Masters
Erik Smith, Biological Sciences
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Xiaoting Zhao, former Physical Sciences

All questions regarding the Graduate and Professional Community
Initiative should be directed to gpsa@cornell.edu.

Cornell University
Graduate and Professional Student Assembly