

**A&S Graduate Student Association**  
Minutes for the Nov. 15 Meeting



Wednesday, November 15  
James Blair, Rm 221  
6.00-7.00 pm

**I. Announcements**

- A. Upcoming Meetings  
James Blair, Room 221  
6-7 pm  
Wednesday, December 6
- B. Graduate Research Symposium  
Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup> & Saturday, March 31st  
*Announce Call for Abstracts to Departments*  
Call for Abstracts Deadline: Friday, December 1  
Submit abstracts at <http://www.wm.edu/so/gsa/symposium/index.php>
- C. GradBash  
Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup> in the Sunken Gardens  
Tailgate from 11am-1pm  
Last Home football game 1pm-4pm  
GradBash 4pm-7pm  
(Expect lots of food, beverages, live music, and kickball)
- D. Student Conference Funding  
Please review the current guidelines so we can discuss revisions during the December meeting.

**II. Items for Discussion**

- A. Student Assembly – Matt Young  
Constitutional Convention
- B. Parking – Libby Neidenbach
- C. Health Insurance – John Miller

**III. Adjournment**

## Current Student Conference Funding Guidelines

The Graduate Student Association Supplemental Conference Fund (GSA-SCF) is a competitive fund for graduate students in the school of Arts and Sciences who wish to attend or present at conferences in their field of study. The fund is financed through the GSA-A&S's vending revenue and is solely administered by the GSA-A&S. The GSA-A&S realized that funding sources have been insufficient to meet the needs of graduate students. For example, the Student Activities Conference Fund (SACF), which is open to both undergraduate and graduate students, awards a maximum of \$300.00 for travel only to students giving presentations. The SACF also cannot cover most international travel and limits funding per student when a number of students apply to attend the same conference. You can find more information about the SACF at <http://www.wm.edu/studentactivities/funding/conference.php>. The goal of the GSA-SCF is to supplement other funding sources and to aid in meeting the particular needs of graduate students. Since conference experience and attendance are increasingly important for the job market, the GSA-SCF was designed to be flexible enough to address some of the limitations of other sources. Given the limited resources available, the fund cannot completely cover any one student's expenses, but the GSA-A&S is happy to assist graduate students in whatever way it can. Since this fund is only a supplement, students should:

- 1st - Submit a written request for funding to their department along with a completed [travel authorization form](#) for the department's approval
- 2nd - Apply for the Student Activities Conference Fund.
- 3rd - Apply for the GSA-Supplemental Conference Fund.
- 4th - Apply to any other sources available, such as the [Reeves Center](#). They have grants for grad students traveling internationally. Questions may be directed to Karen Dolan at [ksdola@wm.edu](mailto:ksdola@wm.edu) [ksdola@wm.edu](mailto:ksdola@wm.edu).

### Award Size

The GSA-A&S will award \$100.00 to chosen applicants. The award is based upon a subjective review of the application by the GSA-A&S. Therefore, the applicant should clearly justify on the application the need and importance of attending the conference. This amount is automatically matched by the Dean's office, and could also be matched by the student's home department. The total award is \$200.00 (or \$300.00 if the home department meets the match). Individuals can receive one award per calendar year.

Award recipients are required to give a talk at the Graduate Research Symposium (March 30 and 31, 2007) unless the date of the Symposium conflicts with the conference the recipient is attending. Please note, **this is a new stipulation**.

### How To Apply

The student must complete the two-page application, [GSA Student Conference Fund Application \(PDF\)](#), and forward it with a copy of any conference literature to the GSA mailbox in Stetson House -- 232 Jamestown Road (see mailing address below). The application must be received by the GSA-A&S on or before the deadline to be considered for an award. Applications may be submitted anytime during the academic year on or before the deadline. The committee will meet within one week of the deadline to consider applications. The students who receive awards will be notified within ten days of the deadline. Please note that for an application to be considered for an award, **the department of the applicant must be in good standing with the GSA**, meaning a representative from the department must regularly attend GSA meetings as specified in the GSA constitution.

*Mailing Address*

Graduate Student Association (GSA)  
Office of Graduate Studies and Research  
Stetson House  
232 Jamestown Road  
Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795

### **Deadlines**

Fall conference attendance (August 31 - December 31, 2006) **October 13, 2006, 5pm**

Spring conference attendance **TBA**

Summer conference attendance **TBA**

**These deadlines are subject to change.**

**Under exceptional circumstances, applications may be accepted after the deadline.**

### **Procedure for Reimbursement**

As mentioned above, the award is \$100 from the Graduate Student Association, \$100 from the Dean of Graduate Studies, and possibly another \$100 from the student's department. Departments may or may not match the \$100 award. **It is the responsibility of the awardee to contact their respective department as soon as possible and request that the \$100 award be matched.**

Students should submit a [travel reimbursement voucher](#) to the home department no later than 5 days after the trip so that the department can receive reimbursement from the GSA and Graduate Dean for the student's award. Students will be responsible for submitting original receipts to the home department along with the travel reimbursement voucher. The travel authorization form should have been submitted prior to the trip. Students should check with their home department for procedures of payment for registration fees, transportation, lodging and meals. **Awardees should follow through on all reimbursement procedures as outlined by the department.** A separate form may be required for reimbursement of the Student Activities Conference Funds (SACF).

## Attendance

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Department</i>
1.	Meghan Revelle	CS
2.	Elise Larsen	Bio
3.	Jonathan Holley	Bio
4.	Zach Hilpert	AMST
5.	Mimi Poe	Psych
6.	Gwen Kennedy	PP
7.	Matt Young	PP
8.	Joanna Conder	PP
9.	John Miller	AMST
10.	Kristie Schmidt	Chem
11.	Andrew Sturtvant	History
12.	Libby Neidenbach	AMST

Mimi called the meeting to order at 6:03pm. She immediately gave the floor to John for a health insurance update. The Graduate Council has formed a committee to continue the work started last year and too look for ways to improve coverage. The committee consists of representatives from each of the five graduate schools. They have had meetings with Christine Briton of the Health Center and Angie Black from the school's current insurance provider. W&M currently is in the last year of a 5-year contract with Student Resources. The next two years are optional, so the contract can be put out to bid. So far, W&M had been bid on by one undesirable company. Student Resources is willing to restructure its proposal by December 15, at which point, the health insurance committee will assess it. Additionally, Dean Sanderson has expressed an interest in working health insurance into graduate stipend packages. Mimi noted that COGS has said that health insurance is their second priority, and Mimi will be writing a memo to them.

Next, Mimi made a number of announcements. First, the last GSA meeting of the semester is Dec. 6 at 6pm in Blair 221. Second, the deadline to submit abstracts to the Graduate Research Symposium is Dec. 1. Please encourage other students in your department to submit! Also, if you have any fundraising ideas that could help us raise money for the Symposium, talk to Elise. Third, Grad Bash is Saturday, Nov. 18. There will be tailgating from 11am to 1pm with food from Subway, then two live band will play from 4pm to 7pm with food from Pierce's and Sal's. The whole day costs \$5. Gwen adds that there will be kickball.

Libby next gave a report of news from the Parking Advisory Committee. Last year, a proposal was made to have cheaper graduate student parking. Currently, the faculty have a tier-based pricing system for parking permits, so the cost of a permit depends on how much the faculty member makes. Graduate student stipends would place them in the first tier (cheapest), but the price we pay for parking permits is comparable to the third tier of the faculty. The only progress that has been made in this area is that now over the summer, students (grad and undergrad) who did not buy a parking permit during the school year can buy one at the first tier price.

Libby's other news from the Parking Advisory Committee was about Common Glory. Common Glory will be closing in January when construction on the new graduate school of business starts. A study was done on the number of used spaces in Common Glory and the number of unused

spaces in the parking garage, and they were found to be roughly equal. However, there are not enough resident spots in the garage, so some of the spots on the second floor are being changed to shared day student/resident parking.

Arts & Sciences Graduate Senator Matt Young gave an update from the Student Assembly. Currently, the structure of the student government leaves it unclear as to whose responsibility it is to implement a bill once it is passed. In an attempt to improve this situation, there is a Constitutional Convention Committee that is reviewing the constitution and will make a recommendation on how to amend it.

Finally, there was a discussion of Supplemental Conference Funding Guidelines. Issues that need to be addressed are: Should applicants have to apply to Student Activities? Should preference be given to applicants who are presenters at their conference? What should be the process by which decisions are made? Should preference be given to long-distance or high-cost travel? If a GSA member applied, should they not be allowed to vote?

The general consensus was that the process for applying needs to be made clearer for applicants. The instructions on the website need to be revised and rewritten in as few words as necessary. Also, electronic submission of applications should be implemented. The deadlines need to be set at the beginning of the year and posted on the website and announced in DYKT?

Concerning the decision-making process, currently it is not an anonymous process. Department representatives may be familiar with and/or biased against the work of applicants from their departments, but hopefully representatives can be mature and objective enough to not vote against someone just because they do not like them.

Gwen and Elise will draft changes to be made to the instructions on the website with the help of Zach and Meghan. The new instructions will eliminate confusion about conference dates and application submission dates, list options for other sources of funding, and have an online submission form. The secretary will likely be the one to collect the applications and match the names to an id number to make the review process anonymous, but then does the secretary not get a vote when decisions are to be made?

The meeting adjourned at 7:22pm.