The September monthly meeting of the Physics Graduate Student Council was held on September 3, 2014 at Panera in Harvard Square. Nick Langellier, Jae Hyeon Lee, Olivia Miller, and Arthur Safira were in attendance. Victor Rodriguez, who was not present at the meeting, briefed the rest of the Council members on the progress of his project before the meeting took place. The present document summarizes items discussed, plans for the upcoming months, and division of responsibilities.

Summary

The following is a summary of items discussed and decisions of the Council.

- Review of activity in the past month: The Council reviewed its activity during the past month and discussed the progress of the current tasks and projects.
  - Arthur: Completed the tasks of requesting the department for the better control of the air-conditioning in the G2 area as well as giving G1 students access to the G2 area. He will check on the status of the latter task in the coming month.
  - Olivia: Spoke with Nick Hurtzler about the movie night, which he will continue for the foreseeable future. She has been coordinating with Lisa Cacciabaudo in organizing the kickball event.
  - Nick: Spoke with Lisa about the possibility of getting more board games for the G1 area. He mentioned that the Council would need the approval of Gerry in order to appropriate the fund for purchasing the board games, which Gerry may be against based on the fact that the department purchased several board games a few years ago. He will continue working on the project in the coming month. He will also post a note in the G1 area about the availability of the board game for students’ use. Nick will continue to organize social hours.
  - Victor: Reported that not many G1 students are enthusiastic about the free coffee project. Despite the discouraging response of the new students about the project, the Council suggested that the PGSC should carry on the project. Arthur suggested an idea of getting a small coffee machine for the G1 area and making instant coffee and tea available for students. Victor will further think about and decide on how to raise fund for and implement the proposed plan.
  - Jae: The annual surveys are currently being administered. So far about 100 students responded to the surveys. The Council decided to send out a few more reminder e-mails to those who have not completed the surveys yet. The survey will be closed around September 12th. Once the survey is completed, Jae will extract raw data from the system. Nick and Jae will meet for the analysis of the result of the survey. At the October monthly meeting, the Council will discuss the results and analysis of the survey, set long-term objectives for the Council, and decide on how to share the results with the rest of the graduate community.
Jae also created a “prototype” of the website. Until the next monthly meeting, the Council will work on the website through iterative process of feedback/discussion/editing.

- The preparation of agenda: At the meeting, the Council agreed to make preparing agenda for monthly meetings a President’s responsibility. The rationale behind the decision is that having one person prepare an agenda, keep records, and organize tasks facilitate the collaboration among members.

- Providing graduate students access to the parking lot behind Jefferson: Nick brought up the item for discussion. He noted that in the afternoon when faculty and staffs have left for home, the parking lot behind Jefferson is usually empty. He proposed an idea of making the lot available to graduate students in the evening for those who own a car. He will explore whether this is feasible as well as what would be involved in making this happen.

- Gym hours: Arthur mentioned that several students would find extended gym hours during the summer season convenient. He will explore what would be involved in making that happen.

- G1 survey/exit survey/alumni survey: Jae will conduct the G1 surveys after the kickball event. Jae will talk to Lisa about how to conduct exiting student survey. Jae will draft alumni surveys.¹

- Review of the draft of the proposed guidelines for the use of the G2 area: The Council found Jae’s draft of the guidelines for the use of the G2 area reasonable and approved for further feedback from other graduate students. An e-mail soliciting for feedback will be sent out to G2, G3, and G4 students.

- Meeting with other department student leaders: Jae will contact various other department student leaders to set up a meeting where the Council can learn more about what kinds of graduate student support they receive from their department. Once the meeting is scheduled, the Council will compile a list of questions to be discussed at the meeting.

- A suggestion for the website: Arthur made a suggestion for the Council’s website, creating a page that will lists alumni’ contact information (and perhaps brief bios) who agree to be contacted by current graduate students. Jae will implement this on the website.

- Letter to alumni: Jae will draft a letter to alumni, which will be reviewed by the Council before being sent out to alumni.²

- Opening an bank account for the Council: Arthur will discuss this possibility with Gerry to understand what the department’s position is on the matter.

- Desk assignment: The Council decided to request the administration to take over the task of assigning desks in the G2 area.

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**Plans and division of responsibilities**

Below is the summary of the plans and division of responsibilities within the Council until the next monthly meeting.

- Shared tasks:
  1. Send Jae pictures for the website.
  2. Provide feedback about the content of the website.

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¹Jae decided to do this after the analysis of the survey since the Council’s objectives will be clearer then.

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• **Arthur:**
  1. Follow up on the task of giving G1 students access to G2 area.
  2. Explore the possibility of opening an external bank account for the Council.
  3. Investigate what would be involved in extending gym hours during the summer season.

• **Olivia:**
  1. Organize the kickball event.
  2. Later in the month, begin discussing with the G2 students organizing the puppet show event to be held in February.

• **Nick:**
  1. Follow up on the project of getting more board games for the G1 area.
  2. Continue organizing social hour.
  3. Explore what would be involved in giving graduate students access to the parking lot behind Jefferson after hours.
  4. Analyze the results of the survey with Jae.

• **Victor:**
  1. Decide on how to raise fund for the proposed plan for the project above and implement.

• **Jae:**
  1. Conduct the G1 survey after the kickball event.
  2. Close the on-going surveys and analyze with Nick.
  3. Set up a meeting with other department’s student leaders.
  4. Finish building the website.