

GSC Board of Directors Meeting  
April 3, 2003  
Winnett Club Room

**ATTENDANCE**

**Directors Present:**

Heather Cox, Chip Sumner, Jeff Bergthorson, Michael Johnson, Alex Tobias, Marissa Mock, Steve Pracko, John Choi, Ileana Carpen, Isaac Chenchiah, Lauren Webb, Graeme Smith, Stephanie Chow, Ying Gong, Michael Fleming, Surelys Galano.

**Directors Absent:**

Harish Bhat, Theofilos Strinopoulos, John Bender, Tim Lesko, John Dabiri, Chris Veazey, Niki Galownia.

**PRELIMINARY BUSINESS**

**A. Call to Order.**

Chip called the meeting to order at 12:06 PM.

**B. Introduction of Guests.**

John Murphy and Ted Harder are guests from the GRB.

**C. Modifications to the Agenda.**

None.

**D. Approval of the Minutes of March.**

Chip had some corrections, and Steve pointed out an additional error: Heather conflated Tom Mannion with Dan Meiron. The March minutes were approved, with these changes.

**E. Rename "Executive Officer" to "Executive Director".**

Chip mentioned that we had passed a resolution for "Executive Officer" rather than "Executive Director" last month. The Board voted to replace "Executive Officer" with "Executive Director" in the resolution.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**1. New Nomination Form**

Chip passed out copies of the new nomination form he developed, which had also been sent out previously to BoD members. The new form differs from the previous one in that it explains why we typically do not hold elections for representatives, and it describes the conditions under which an election would be required. It also explains the duties of the BoD and GRB members.

The bylaws require us to notify students at least ten days before the nomination form is due. Mike is working on a recruiting letter that will accomplish that goal; however, there was concern that the April 18 deadline shown on the form would not leave us sufficient time to get the letter to student mailboxes. Therefore, we decided to push the deadline back to April 21st.

**Action:** The new nomination form was approved by a vote of the Board.

## **2. Election Details: New Board and Officers**

The Steering Committee has recommended that elections should be held on April 28 (if they are necessary at all). If there are too many representatives in an option, hopefully we can move some of them to at-large representatives, so we have the maximum number of BoD members possible (and avoid having to reject willing volunteers). Chip said that the election scheduling does not match the scheduling set in the Bylaws; however, the Bylaws require us to follow a chain of events leading up to the elections, and we no longer have enough time to satisfy those requirements while still meeting the deadline for the election. Moving the deadline back will allow us to meet all of the other requirements set out in the Bylaws (such as giving proper notification to students). Also, the Bylaws require that the transition of power happen within ten days of the election. Traditionally, we have done that at the May meeting, and the April 28 scheduling will allow us to continue doing so. Someone asked why we had made this mistake, and Chip replied that it was a simple misunderstanding of the Bylaws, partially influenced by a reliance on our traditional approach.

We discussed how the transition of power should occur. Chip felt that the new Board should have the opportunity to get to know the potential officers before casting votes. He proposed that the candidates each take a few minutes to introduce themselves and make a speech outlining their visions for the upcoming year at the beginning of the May meeting. Then the new Board can elect its officers. People seemed to think this was a good idea.

[See below for additional discussion on the need for officers at the end of the "Institutional Memory" agenda item.]

**Action:** Voted to hold elections on April 28.

## **3. Institutional Memory**

Ileana reminded the committee chairs that each committee needs to consolidate its important information to pass on to next year's chair; copies should also be given to Heather to file with the GSC's records. Alex can arrange for people to get copies made on the GSC's account.

Ileana said that committee should focus on collecting letters to and from the committee, records of committee decisions, minutes, posters advertising events,

and e-mails from people outside the GSC. It's also important to collect information that people received while representing us on outside committees. For confidential information, the committee chairs should make a judgment call; if the material is institute-confidential, it should be fine to store in our file cabinets. However, documents that are committee confidential (for example, resumes from a search committee) probably shouldn't be kept in this way.

Isaac said that he was not planning to serve on the GSC next year, and he was wondering if he could still sit on a committee. Chip replied that he could, since the committees are open to all students.

Chip wanted to remind the Board that we still need candidates for many of the officers' positions. Chip has enjoyed his time as GSC Chair: the position allows a student to communicate with many campus dignitaries, and gives one a chance to have a significant influence on the graduate experience at Caltech. Chip also pointed out that the position of Secretary would be good for someone who is new to the BoD but wanted to learn how the GSC and Caltech work. No takers immediately emerged.

#### **4. Discretionary Funds for Committees**

Alex and the Budget Committee suggested that the committees each have discretionary funds for small expenses: food for parties celebrating accomplishments, meetings, prizes (for surveys and otherwise), and anything else that the committee chairs deem necessary. They suggest \$300 for the Steering Committee and \$100 for the other committees, as well as \$100 for a general photocopying fund. Steering committee funds are to be used for similar expenses for the BoD.

There is currently a steering committee fund (initially \$200) for use in purchasing office supplies and making photocopies. It was suggested that we increase the amount for photocopies to \$200 (matching the current funding). The current steering committee fund will be replaced by these new funds. This will be retroactive, so if committee members have spent their own money on such expenses, they can be reimbursed. If more money is needed for any specific initiative, we can revisit this issue and allocate more funds.

**Action:** The BoD voted to allocate \$200 for photocopying, office supplies, and other sundries (for use by all committees). Also set up discretionary funds of \$300 for the Steering Committee and \$100 for the other committees, including the GRB. The total is \$1300, but the funds already in the steering committee (~\$160) will be put toward this use. The remaining money will come from unallocated funds.

#### **5. Recruitment Budget**

Chip and John Choi have been working on posters to raise awareness of the GSC and GRB around campus. The goal is to inform people of what we have been

doing and to attract new BoD and GRB members. Chip had many posters that he distributed to poster volunteers after the meeting. We discussed where to hang posters; there seem to be rather complicated rules on campus. Organizations are not allowed to post posters outside except on designated kiosks and bulletin boards (although other groups have taped posters on the ground or stuck them to light posts). It's possible that we might be able to ask someone about hanging posters in the Red Door and/or Chandler, especially since one of the posters Chip has created is an advertisement for the Broad Café graduate student discount. In addition to the posters, Mike is composing a letter to send out to all graduate students inviting them to join the BoD and GRB. The letter will include a copy of the nomination form.

Chip had already created and duplicated the posters, and reported that the cost for the posters would be \$80. This money will come out of the Advertising Fund. We then talked about various options for the mailing, which we will be sending out through Graphic Arts. It will be at least two pages (one page for the letter and one page for the nomination form), and the letter might take up two pages. We discussed whether or not to use an envelope for the mailing, and decided to do so; it should get slightly more attention than a mailing without an envelope (you have to open it, at least).

**Action:** Voted to use envelopes for the recruitment letter, and authorized Chip to shop around for the best deal. We will fund both the posters (from the Advertising Fund) and the letter (from unallocated funds).

## **6. Thank You Cards**

At the Retreat, we thought it would be nice to send thank you cards to people who have helped us. We can buy personalized thank you cards, with the GSC logo printed on the outside, for about \$0.60 each.

**Action:** Allocated \$50 to purchase thank you cards from unallocated funding.

## **7. BoD Dinner**

Mike would like to schedule the yearly BoD dinner to thank everyone for their work this year. He proposed either Thursday, April 17, or Monday, April 21, as possible dates. Thursday (April 17) at 7:30 pm seemed to be the best time for the most members, so we scheduled the dinner accordingly.

## **8. Yuri's Night**

The organizers of Yuri's Night changed the venue from the science museum to Encounters (the odd, UFO-like structure at LAX). Because of this, they will only have room for 400 people (instead of the 1500-2000 they expected). They are not going to allow all graduate students in for free, as they did in previous years; instead, they are giving us tickets for 75 people in exchange for our funding. We have set aside funding for a bus to the event, as well.

We decided to make the bus available to students and to sell the tickets to Yuri's Night for \$7 at the Red Door. (If people pay for the tickets, they will be more inclined to show up; the actual price of the tickets is \$20.) Because so few students can attend the event, we would like to be able to throw a term party with the remaining funds. Surelys gallantly volunteered to host the proposed term party, so we decided to go ahead with the term party.

**Action:** Decided to fund Yuri's Night as they asked and sell the Yuri's Night tickets for \$7. The remaining money from the original Yuri's Night allocation, and the money from the ticket sales, will be used to host a term party.

#### **9. Moore Fund Representatives**

Alex Tobias and Graeme Smith are currently on the committee to create the rules overseeing the Moore Fund. They agreed to serve as our representatives on the Moore Fund committee. Surelys volunteered to be an alternate.

**Action:** Approved Alex Tobias and Graeme Smith as the Moore Fund representatives, and Surelys Galano as the alternate.

#### **10. Newsletter Bonus**

**Action:** Steve's \$50 newsletter bonus was passed for the month of March.

### **UPDATES AND REPORTS**

#### **1. Academics Committee**

The Everhart Lecture Series have been scheduled: the first one will be today at 3 pm. 120 seats are available. Lauren has talked with the SURF office, and they are excited about getting graduate students involved with the program; they would like to develop an orientation for graduate students who are mentoring SURFs, and hold small meetings during the summer for graduate student mentors. The wording for the new guidelines for advising committee meetings, to be put in the catalog, is currently being worked out by Mike Fleming and Dean Hoffman.

Also, several volunteers are needed. One is needed for the Leadership Certificate program training: this program is (at least initially) for the undergraduates. Mike Fleming said he would do this beginning next month, and Marissa agreed to keep going this month. Also, two volunteers are needed for the Ph.D./postdoc career conference; Graeme Smith and Ying Gong volunteered.

#### **2. Publications Board**

The meeting with PR went well: PR gave an overview of what they do, offered their help with our website, and said that they would improve the directory staff email. They also offered to help us with promotion and advertising strategies. They also offered us space on their web server so that we could take advantage of some of the tools they have developed. It was suggested that these meetings become a monthly occurrence.

Mike Johnson is the new secretary for the Pubs Board, which will meet on the last Thursday of every month at lunch. There was no report on the *Technique*, as Libby was out of town.

Mike Fleming mentioned that he would like the submissions he's requested for the Annual Report by April 10; Alex asked what was required of the Treasurer (the current status of the budget).

Lab Reviews currently reports both to Academics and the Publications Board; it will continue to do so. The data is on the web site and Julie is looking into getting responses from 2002 graduates. She's going to use the option secretaries to track down emails. The Handbook is still lacking submissions, so please send them in! We need to decide on printing and distribution of this. Only John Choi has bemoaned the loss of the HTML Newsletter, and it's looking snappy; there was a brief discussion about an "unnamed person" who volunteered to look into programs to change the PDF document to HTML format. PageMaker will do this, but is expensive.

Finally, Steve would like to create a photo library for use by any or all of the GSC publications. The suggestion was made to solicit contributions from the graduate student body, initially through the newsletter, but perhaps also through flyers or posters. Credit could be given in the publication when photographs are used.

### **3. Alumni Board Report**

Mike reported on the last meeting of the Alumni Board. The victories of the Caltech figure skating team (winners of the regional championships) and of the Caltech chess team (whose press releases we've gotten) were mentioned. Also, the story of Margo and the undergraduates was covered (the Ricketts fire pot debacle and ensuing fallout). Margo and Ted Jou introduced the concept of a "culture of demoralization" among the undergraduate student body. Many of the alumni still feel strong ties to their undergraduate houses, so they were interested in the undergraduate happenings. Graduate students were mentioned briefly as having some concerns. The Alumni Fund is interested in figuring out how to raise money from graduate students. The BoD had several suggestions: they can stop soliciting from students who are currently here, and also use the correct salutation for their Ph.D. alumni ("Dr." rather than "Mr."). Mike mentioned that some people feel that they do not want to give money to Caltech while the current administration is in power.

### **4. Quality of Life Committee**

Mike Fleming, Matt Cook, and Jon Galownia had a meeting with Al Horvath to discuss the decision about building a new parking lot under the north athletic fields. (Previous information from the Parking Committee indicated that if a new parking structure were to be built, Caltech would begin charging for parking.) Vice-President Horvath explained that he did not want to make the information

public because Pasadena has not yet approved the plans, and did not run this decision by the Parking Committee because he wanted to take advantage of a bond issue coming up. He also said that he has requested that the Parking Committee begin meeting again to discuss issues such as charging for parking. There was a question about whether the north fields would be available this summer; Heather didn't know.

In other news, Heather wrote a letter to various people involved in workers' compensation to try and clarify what should happen when a graduate student is injured on the job; she did this in response to an email stating that different departments on campus (Health Center, Safety) were giving conflicting instructions to students. Also, Heather has set up a meeting with Margo to discuss her worries about committees that are not meeting (such as Parking and Health).

## **5. Housing Committee and CHCC Reports**

Ken Cooper is finishing his thesis and will no longer be on the committee. Steve will take over Ken's duties as secretary until a replacement can be found. The first meeting of the Catalina Ethernet committee will be on Monday, April 8, and Steve Pracko and Chunhui Mo will be the graduate student representatives. Physical plant and the provost will be included in these meetings.

**Action:** The BoD confirmed Steve and Chunhui as the representatives.

The rules for the housing lottery need to be reviewed, but no changes should be necessary. The committee will also be looking over the housing questions from the WEST/GSC survey.

The Housing Committee thinks that it would be a good idea to reinstitute the practice of obtaining semiannual reports for the individual CHCCs about the projects they have worked on. This would be a good means for tracking the effectiveness of the program and give the Housing Committee useful information, enabling them to provide feedback to the Housing office. In this way, the Housing Committee could help the CHCCs institute change if they are running into opposition. This will be discussed with CHCCs who are not on the housing committee. The committee also needs new members and a recruitment strategy.

The CHCC Report:

*The Bourne Identity* was shown on 3/30 and about 15 people turned out for the movie, donuts, and sodas.

The new bulletin boards were ordered: two 3'x4' boards for the Central Cats mailbox area, and eight 2'x4' boards for around the complex.

The emergency plaques have been installed on the inside of the front doors. Clips have been installed on the outside of the doors (primarily for use in posting Grad Housing notices).

We will purchase a number of tickets for the LA Botanic Gardens concert in late July and ask interested residents to pay a portion of the cost (\$16 per ticket, with the group discount).

The card-swipe system for laundry should be available for testing soon (several months after it was originally promised).

As yet there has been no decision on a CHCC game night.

**6. Social Committee**

There will be a brewery tour on April 26 and the wine tour is set for May. Ying will be organizing another ice cream social this spring. A graduate student beach trip is planned for this summer, as well as a jazz night with wine and cheese.

**7. Underrepresented Students Committee**

Three graduate students have volunteered to be representatives on the *ad hoc* child care committee. Marissa will notify the appropriate parties (such as the child care committee chairs).

The US Committee discussed creating an email disclaimer for our advertising of events that do not conform to our non-discriminatory events policy. They decided that the best solution might be to create a web form to fill out for all events, so that all mailings will specify the sponsors of the events advertised. This will also give us a natural way to include CABS and Graduate Student Housing as sponsors of GSC events. The US Committee decided on several things that should be included in the web form, and Marissa has contacted the compczars about creating the form.

The issue of minority student admissions was also discussed on the committee. It seems that the Dean feels that the options view minority students as “high risk” admits. This came up at a faculty board meeting, and some options said that they admit the top X percent of students, regardless of race. There was then discussion about borderline cases and what happened there. It seems that the administration might be thinking that the options are not trying hard enough to increase diversity. It might help to improve the atmosphere on campus and make it more welcoming to minorities; one way this could occur is by asking the faculty to go through sensitivity training, or training in different communications styles. If the campus were seen as a friendlier place for minorities, they might be happier and also be viewed as less “high risk.” Someone asked how the current superior court considerations of affirmative action policies might impact this. We don’t really know, but it cannot hurt the school to make itself more attractive to underrepresented students.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 PM.