

GSC Board of Directors Meeting
May 1, 2003
Winnett Club Room

ATTENDANCE

Directors Present:

Heather Cox, Alex Tobias, Julie Liu, Kimberly Beatty, Chip Sumner, Michael Fleming, Lauren Webb, John Bender, Marissa Mock, Ileana Carpen, John Murphy, Stephanie Chow, Michael Johnson, Jeff Bergthorson, Ying Gong, Isaac Chenchiah, Joel Grus, Karen Smith, Ted Harder, Steve Pracko, Graeme Smith, Sureyls Galano, Jon Galownia, Niki Galownia, John Choi, Tim Lesko.

GRB Guests:

Asa Hopkins, Kaushik Dayal.

Directors Absent:

Harish Bhat, Theofilos Strinopoulos, John Dabiri, Chris Veazey, Edwin Soedarmadji.

MEETING OF MEMBERS

The meeting of members was called to order at 12:04 and subsequently adjourned, since no one had any business for this meeting.

PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

A. Call to Order.

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

A. Modifications to the Agenda.

None.

A. Approval of the Minutes of April.

Since Chip had not read the April minutes, their approval was tabled until the June meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Introductions

We have many new board members, as well as guests from the GRB, so we went around the room and introduced ourselves.

1. Welcome to the BoD

Chip welcomed the new members of the BoD and talked about our mission and structure.

1. Confirmation Vote for Directors at Large

Action: The BoD voted to confirm the appointment of the directors at large. They are Jeff Bergthorson (Aero), Ileana Carpen (ChE), Mike Fleming (EE), Jon Galownia (ChE), Julie Liu (ChE), and John Murphy (ChE).

1. Call for Officers

The candidates for the officers' positions are Marissa Mock for chair, Lauren Webb for vice-chair, John Bender for executive director, Alex Tobias for treasurer, and Ted Harder and John Murphy running for GRB chair. The position of GSC secretary was still open as of the creation of the agenda. Heather plugged the position a little bit, saying that it could be a good way to figure out what was going on in the BoD and get more involved with the GSC. Heather became the secretary at her first GSC meeting, so new members can also tackle the position. A long silence ensued until Surelys Galano bravely volunteered to run for secretary.

1. GSC Election Campaign

Marissa led off with a short campaign speech. She would like to see a greater emphasis on the committee system and give committee chairs power and autonomy. Many discussions will be conducted on committees and the committee decision will be taken to the BoD for an official vote, as happened with the nondiscriminatory events issue this year. The input and discussion period will occur on the committee rather than at the BoD meetings. The chair, vice-chair, and executive director will have monthly meetings with the committee chairs. Since the triumvirate will not be actively participating in committees (aside from the steering committee), they will be reading the minutes of the committees, so the chair and secretary positions within committees will be more important.

Some key topics for next year: working more actively with PR, improving the campus climate for diversity, improving the quality of teaching, and beginning to examine some of the problems with the Honor Code. Lauren and John seconded these goals.

Alex said that he would ensure that our finances continued to run smoothly (he has done a good job this year!). He credited Excel and his calculator for contributing to the financial functioning of the GSC.

1. GRB Election Campaign

Ted Harder and John Murphy are both interested in being chair of the GRB. They have agreed that the person who is not elected chair will serve as the secretary of the GRB. Chip proposed that the candidates speak (for three minutes each) in alphabetical order, and no one disagreed.

Ted Harder went first. He is a third year in EE and believes that the Honor Code makes Caltech unique. It allows the pursual of goals without worrying about the standards of conduct in the outside world. He has seen Isaac Chenchiah and Jim Harrington in action, and would like to take over leadership of the GRB. He was involved in student government at Duke and has volunteered and done advocacy work throughout. Ted believes that there are problems with the PR of the GRB, which has a fairly low profile, and he's interested in raising awareness of the GRB. He would like to build relationships with the BoC and has recently gotten an email from the BoC. It is important to communicate the honor code to faculty and TAs, and coordinate efforts with the GSC. He would like to institute monthly meetings of the GRB, and spark some enthusiasm there.

John Murphy followed. He's a fourth year ChemE and has been on the GRB for three years. He feels we all benefit from the honor code and must maintain the GRB. He would like to follow up on the course policy forms that the BoC suggested to the Faculty Board, which will help to clarify course policies. He is also interested in having a forum to educate new faculty about the honor code and in raising awareness of the honor code. We need to have a balance between anonymity and awareness of the honor code, and John suggests a combination of meetings and briefings about the GRB.

There were several questions: how the candidates would raise awareness and whether they felt that nullification was enough in cases where the honor code is violated. Ideas for raising awareness about the GRB included skits during orientation, an annual report, GSC newsletter articles, and faculty orientation (from Ted); John seconded the skits and newsletter articles, suggested publishing in the *Tech*, and wanted to seek funding for a professional event to help with clearer communication. The nullification question was a bit more difficult; the unique nature of every case was cited. John Choi suggested that this was not the time for a discussion of the Honor Code, but a vote for who would be chair. We then passed out election ballots for people to fill out while hearing about the committees (and signing up for committees).

1. **Joining Committees**

In the structure of the GSC, there are eight or nine committees that deal with various graduate student issues. One of a Board member's duties is to sit on at least one, and preferably two, committees. We hope to avoid overloading so that people can actively participate in the committees. Each committee chair gave a short summary of the committee's past and present work, to help new board members decide what committees to join. (The GRB did not make a presentation, as it requires a separate nomination to join.)

Academics: Lauren talked about the Academics committee, which is concerned with all aspects of the academic environment of graduate students at Caltech. Committee members sit on several institute faculty and administrative committees

covering library, computing, and graduate studies issues. The committee is responsible for the Everhart Lecture Series of graduate student speakers and the annual GSC teaching awards.

Recent issues addressed by the committee include revising requirements for graduate student advising to ensure that students have adequate access to their thesis committee. This should help to maintain reasonable graduation times and to minimize student-advisor conflict. The committee worked with the Caltech Project for Effective Teaching to implement TA evaluation forms in all divisions so that graduate student TAs can get meaningful feedback on their teaching. They also evaluated and are in the process of improving graduate student involvement as mentors in the SURF program.

Lauren also mentioned that the Academics Committee works on the library and computer issues that confront the campus. For example, the HSS library is being moved from Millikan into Dabney. Caltech is also at the forefront of implementing a digital library, and is encountering issues related to that: for example, journals are trying to track the individual articles that specific users access.

Budget: Alex Tobias is the head of the Budget Committee, as treasurer. The committee helps decide how the GSC raises and spends its money, and tries to make the standards for granting funding as objective and as fair as possible. The Budget Committee formulates the annual GSC budget (about \$54,000 per annum). Every September, the Budget Committee meets to evaluate the Club Funding proposals.

In 2002-2003, the Budget Committee successfully raised an additional \$5,000 for the GSC from Campus and Auxiliary Business Services (CABS). They succeeded in changing the GSC's campus account status from a "Gift" account to an "Agency" account, resulting in significantly more financial independence for the GSC. Recently, the Budget Committee amended the QuickFunding procedure to allow for more discussion among BoD members before voting on QuickFunding requests. At the same time, a special QuickFunding internet discussion board was instituted to record these discussions.

Bylaws: This committee was not active this year, but Chip spoke about it. The Bylaws Committee is charged with bringing our organizational rules up to date by proposing new amendments to the Bylaws. Several sections are poorly worded and confusing; others are out of date and do not reflect our current practices. There are also important amendments that need to be formulated in order to significantly improve the efficiency of the GSC. Finally, the committee will provide a valuable resource in helping to interpret the Bylaws.

Housing: Steve is our current housing committee chair. The Housing committee addresses issues related to housing availability and cost, as well as those

involving policies governing Caltech-owned graduate housing. Past projects include rewriting the rules for the housing committee, working on the Catalina networking project, and monitoring the CHCC program (as well as providing a monthly CHCC report to the GSC). In the coming year, the top priority of the housing committee should be to assess the availability and affordability of housing for graduate students, both on- and off-campus, and present recommendations to the administration for how to address the situation.

Publications: Steve is also the head of the publications board. This committee directs the print and electronic publications of the GSC. At present these include the *Technique*, Graduate Student Handbook, the GSC Newsletter, and Lab Reviews (with the Academics committee). The committee also works on matters related to GSC publicity; they communicate with the Caltech Public Relations office and look for ways to promote a positive image for the GSC. They select the *Technique* editor each year and are working with the electronic media publications office to improve the directory e-mail system for graduate students. They are also creating the inaugural edition of the Graduate Student Handbook. Next year, a redesign of the GSC website is in order (the Caltech web people have offered to provide a lot of help on this). The committee will also work to identify ways of increasing GSC visibility on campus, including a GSC display case in a high-visibility location.

Quality of Life: Heather is the chair of the Quality of Life committee. In the past few years, there have been several big decisions that impact the quality of graduate student life. The Quality of Life committee takes on some of these issues: the representative to the Institute Art Committee reports to QoL, as do representatives from the Parking and Health committees. In addition to health care, artwork, and parking, we are also looking into safety in labs, dial-up fees, and athletics.

This year, the committee has helped implement discounts at Broad and Avery for graduate students. They have met with the safety office to discuss lab safety and have provided useful information about our health insurance plan on our website. Major projects for next year include maintaining our relationship with Dining Services, making sure that important institute committees are meeting, and tackling any crises that might arise. The committee might want to focus on proactive approaches to potential problems (with Health Care, Parking, Institute Art, etc.), rather than trying to fix things once decisions have been made.

Social: Jeff spoke on behalf of the social committee. The GSC has traditionally been focused on providing social outlets for graduate students. Lack of a social life is one of the biggest complaints by graduate students at Caltech. With the new problems facing Caltech and the cuts to student services, the GSC has taken up more of an advocacy role, but we shouldn't forget that students give us money every term to throw events for them!

The GSC social committee organizes GUSH, the term parties, dinner with the GSC, wine tours, brewery tours, ice cream socials, and of course, Gradiators and NSO. All BoD members should help out with these last two, as they are our biggest events of the year, and give us the best publicity. Plus, they are tremendously fun!

Underrepresented Students: Marissa has led the US committee, which is committed to serving students who have been historically underrepresented on campus and/or on the GSC. This committee hears from representatives from the ad hoc Childcare committee, the Diversity Statement committee, and the Foreign Students and Scholars committee. We have also participated in the advisory committee for the Women's Center/Postdoc Association mentoring program for female graduate students.

This year, the committee created an informative flyer on Repetitive Stress Injuries that was distributed to all students during new student orientation. They helped re-draft the GSC bylaws on nondiscrimination to clearly allow funding of inclusive events and deny funding to exclusive events. They also hosted a very successful GUSH on the Beckman Lawn that included lawn games and non-traditional beverages. They are planning to meet with the administration to discuss cultural sensitivity and clashes in communication styles on campus.

Action: All BoD members joined committees. The makeup of each committee is shown below.

Academics: Jeff Bergthorson, Stephanie Chow, Mike Fleming, Ted Harder, Julie Liu, Lauren Webb

Bylaws: John Murphy, Chip Sumner, Asa Hopkins, Marissa Mock

Budget: Jeff Bergthorson, Heather Cox, Michael Johnson, Marissa Mock, Steve Pracko, Graeme Smith, Alex Tobias

GRB: Ileana Carpen, John Choi, Ted Harder, John Murphy

Housing: John Murphy, Steve Pracko, Karen Smith, Chip Sumner

Publications: Ileana Carpen, John Choi, Jon Galownia, Michael Johnson, Steve Pracko, Tim Lesko

Social: Kim Beatty, Jeff Bergthorson, Stephanie Chow, Surelys Galano, Michael Johnson, Steve Pracko, Graeme Smith, Alex Tobias

Quality of Life: John Bender, Matthew Cook, Heather Cox, Jon Galownia, Niki Galownia, Joel Grus, Julie Liu, Chip Sumner

Underrepresented Students: Kim Beatty, Stephanie Chow, Heather Cox, Niki Galownia, Joel Grus, Graeme Smith, Karen Smith

The votes were tallied by John Choi as GRB chair, and the new officers were officially voted in by the BoD. The new officers are

Chair:	Marissa Mock
Vice-Chair:	Lauren Webb
Executive Director:	John Bender

Treasurer: Alex Tobias
Secretary: Surelys Galano
GRB Chair: John Murphy
GRB Secretary: Ted Harder

Chip asked whether anyone had any objections to the election process. No one did, so the Board voted to accept these results. Congratulations to all the new officers!

1. Totem Budget

We have budgeted \$350 for the *Totem* this year. We will get a number of copies proportional to our contribution; the current editor says that copies will cost \$3-\$4 each, which will allow us to buy about 100 copies on the current budget. The publications board suggests using \$350 for the *Totem*.

Action: Voted to allocate the budgeted \$350 to the *Totem* (no more).

Also mentioned: the Fishing Quarterly was awarded \$120 through the Quickfunding procedure.

1. Coffeehouse Party

The third annual Coffeehouse Party will be on May 10, from 10 PM – 3 AM. It's open to all graduate and undergraduate students; there will be two rooms with music and a bar. Tom Mannion will be barbecuing hot dogs, sausages, and other such foods on one side of the courtyard. They are asking for \$300, which matches our contributions from previous years.

Several BoD members said that they enjoy the coffeehouse parties. The organizers should advertise in the Catalinas and otherwise attempt to make sure that graduate students know about the party.

Action: Voted to allocate \$300 to the coffeehouse party, \$250 from quickfunding and \$50 from unallocated funds.

1. New Faculty Orientation

Two years ago, the GSC suggested an orientation to Caltech-specific issues designed for new faculty. This topic was recently brought up at the Faculty Board, and there will be a presentation on it at the next Faculty Board by Cathy Jurca. We would like to see information about cultural sensitivity and teaching quality presented in this orientation, as these are topics that seem useful for our faculty. It is also important to cover how the Honor Code works at Caltech and the authority of the GRB, as there are sometimes conflicts between a professor's idea of how to deal with academic dishonesty and how the GRB chooses to deal with it.

Mike Fleming asked for volunteers to brainstorm more ideas for new faculty orientation and to talk with Cathy Jurca. Ted Harding, Jon Galownia, Niki Galownia, Stephanie Chow, John Murphy, Heather Cox, and Marissa Mock volunteered to help with this effort.

2. Survey Committee: Call for Coders

The state of the campus survey is due to be released in May, and the survey committee has been working very hard to make it as professional as possible. However, the committee would greatly appreciate some help on technical issues. We would like to write a web script that would allow people to claim a prize after completing the survey, without compromising confidentiality. We also need to figure out how to give the survey in smaller segments (for example, by linking several web pages together). We have several ideas from BoD members and from the committee, but we need some people to help implement them. Mike Johnson and John Choi volunteered to help with this project.

3. Newsletter Bonus

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

UPDATES AND REPORTS

1. Secretary's Reminder

Committee chairs need to get Heather information from the committees, as discussed at the last meeting. This is particularly important for committee chairs who are stepping down this year. Mike Johnson added that there is a new archive; if people have important emails that they would like to have saved, they can cc the email to the correct archive (for example, the QoL archive). These emails will be saved in a password-protected portion of our website.

2. Academics Committee

Mike Fleming gave an update on the GSC-II advising efforts. At the last GSC-II meeting, we presented the catalog changes. These basically state that students should meet with their committees annually, beginning at the fourth year and continuing until the student's graduation. Now the challenge will be to make these meetings productive and demonstrate how the process could work.

Also, Lauren has talked with Carolyn Ash about the SURF program, and Carolyn will be setting up an orientation program for graduate mentors. Lauren and Marissa have been involved in this effort. Stephanie has been sitting on the Diversity Committee; it will be conducting small focus groups on campus. Hopefully, the results of this effort will be shared with us.

3. Quality of Life Committee

Heather asked to move the Quality of Life Committee report up a little bit, so that she could cover dinner with the President before people left. She had a meeting with Margo about several issues, and at the meeting Heather suggested that the

President schedule a dinner with incoming and outgoing BoD members. Heather just heard from Suzette Cummings that the President agreed to holding the dinner. Heather wanted to tell the BoD that, when speaking with Margo, she presented the dinner as a time when the BoD and the President could meet at last, and perhaps discuss some issues they have in common (such as increasing diversity on campus). The undergraduate student government used their dinner with the President to ask hard-hitting questions, but at this point, Heather thought it might be more useful to attempt to build a cordial relationship with the President, so that he can get to know and respect us. She wanted to let the BoD know about the terms under which the dinner was scheduled, to make sure that everyone was working together.

Other news from the Quality of Life committee: the Parking Committee will be meeting in May. Our representative wasn't informed of the meeting (sigh!), but Margo told us about it in our last lunch with her, and we'll be at the meeting. The south athletic field and the track are being rebuilt at the moment. Also, Dining Services has instituted more discounts for graduate students at Avery: 10% off lunch from 1:00 to 1:30 pm, and 15% off dinner from 5:30 to 6:30 pm.

4. Social Committee

The Cinco de Mayo party is scheduled for May 2, and the wine tour has been set up for May 10. Forty people signed up for the tour, and another twenty-two people are on the waiting list, so we might want to schedule another tour this summer. The brewery tour on April 26 went well; about thirty people showed up to go to the Craftsman brewery in Pasadena. Yuri's Night was also successful.

5. Publications Board

The handbook is coming along; if you still need to write a section, please do so and submit it soon. The new, more complete mailing list should be coming from EMP soon; we'll be looking forward to that! Also, the publications board is looking into the stock photo gallery idea, and will see if the Caltech PR office will give them access to some of their pictures. They are also investigating options for GSC logo giveaway items (like bottle openers) for distribution at NSO or social events; this would help us increase our name recognition and promote the website.

Within the next month, the website redesign should begin. The Caltech web czars should be able to help us. The *Technique* materials from last year are all online, and Libby is working on this year's edition. The *Totem* deadline is Friday; we have \$350 to buy copies (probably 90-100 issues). The web version should be improved this year.

6. Housing Committee and CHCC Reports

Ethernet in the Cats:

The Catalina networking group had its first meeting on April 8, and will meet again on May 2. Chunhui Mo and Steve Pracko are representing graduate students. The present proposal would have residents paying \$20 per month for the next ten years, in order to pay for the construction costs of installing the system. The primary concern of the administrative working group is whether this cost is affordable to graduate students. In response, the housing committee offered to get feedback from students. We are conducting an online poll; as of Wednesday night we have 315 total votes, including 211 from Catalina residents (representing nearly 50% of the Cats!) We plan to have a town hall meeting next week to discuss the results of the poll and whatever comes out of the next administrative meeting. The present hope of the working group is to have a recommendation by the end of May and a final decision by Commencement. There was a lot of discussion at the BoD meeting about other options for wireless (WAPs), the cost it represents to students, the possibility of getting donors, etc. Everyone was invited to attend the town hall meeting and give input.

The housing lottery materials have gone out, with a deadline of May 12 for response. The housing committee looked over last year's materials and saw no reason to change them.

The CHCC Report:

The new bulletin boards have been installed around the complex, increasing available posting space by a factor of 5 or 6. □ This should be a big help with the upcoming "moving sale" season.

Only eight people showed up for the game night on April 24. This poor turnout was probably due to lack of advertising, as no e-mail was sent out (only flyers were posted).

Thirty tickets for a summer concert at the LA Botanic Gardens in Arcadia have been purchased.

"Out of order" tags have been provided in each laundry room, for residents to place on machines that aren't working. Some people have had clothes damaged when they tried to use malfunctioning machines.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:45 PM.