

PSGSA Newsletter Fall 2019

Board Members

The PSGSA Board is the governing body of the Political Science Graduate Student Association. The PSGSA Board currently has seven elected positions.

President - leads the PSGSA Board and oversees PSGSA activities.

Sarah Leffingwell

Projects: Town Hall, Newsletter, Website, Expanding Alumni Relations, Developing Student-Faculty Interaction

Vice President - leads the PSGSA Board and substitutes for President.

Kristin Bail

Projects: Newsletter, Website, Maintaining Current Repositories, Fundraising, Joint Student/Faculty Events

Treasurer - manages finances.

Josh Holmes

Projects: Fundraising, Expanding Alumni Relations

Social Chair - organizes social and recreational activities.

James Steur

Projects: Job Market Materials Repository, Mentorship Program

Sports Chair - organizes sports activities.

Lula Chen

Projects: Group Volunteer Events, PSGSA Seminar Series

Grievance Committee - addresses grievances with faculty committee.

Miles Williams

Projects: PSGSA Seminar Series, Publications Board, Bulletin Board

Aleena Khan

Projects: Joint Student/Faculty Events, Group Volunteer Events

Dear Political Science Graduate Students,

We hope everyone's having a great start to this academic year! This newsletter includes information on PSGSA decision-making, committee membership for the year, and projects for the year.

Many of our projects are continuations from the previous academic year, with a few new additions. Please see a description of all the projects later in this newsletter. Beginning in the fall term, we also added two new committees to help manage some of the projects that have grown too large for any one person.

We also encourage you to utilize the PSGSA website regularly. All department events, including speaker series and social events, are added to the calendar on the website as they are scheduled. Our many resource pages are accessible via the website, and don't forget about our website feedback form if you any suggestions or comments about GSA activities.

Looking forward to a productive year with you all!

Sincerely,
PSGSA Board

Committee Members

Culture

The Culture Committee works to improve the overall climate of the department, in conjunction with faculty committees

Alice Iannantuoni (Chair), James Steur, Seungmi Kim, Ji Soo Yoo

Math Camp

The Math Camp Committee organizes the annual department Math Camp for incoming PhD students.

James Steur (Chair), Jaeseok Cho, Josh Holmes, Stephen Mullins, Jinwon Lee, Yiqiang Wang

Methods Sequence

The Method Sequence Committee works on improving the use and understanding of empirical methods by Political Science graduate students.

Sanghoon Kim (Chair), Lucie Lu, Miles Williams, James Steur

GEO

The GEO Committee acts as the department's liaison to Union activities

Sarah Leffingwell (Chair), Aleena Khan, Stephen Mullins

Surveys

The Survey Committee is responsible for designing and administering all surveys for the PSGSA.

Rebeca Agosto Rosa (Chair), Aleena Khan, Jiyoung Lee, Shuyuan Shen

Visits

The Visits Committee works with the DGS and other faculty to organize admitted students visits to the department.

Kristin Bail (Chair), Seyoung Jung, Seung Uk Huh, Caleb Griffin, Seongjoon Ahn

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Projects Fall 2019 - Spring 2020

Student Representation to the Department and University

Department Culture

The PSGSA has engaged department leadership in conversations about improving the department culture around sexist, racist, and otherwise discriminatory behavior. This year, efforts continue with the goal of solidifying a long-term department strategy to developing a more inclusive and respectful environment for all students, as well as developing and fielding a department-wide culture survey. These efforts are moving forward via the GSA Culture Committee, the Ad Hoc Faculty Climate Committee, and the Ad Hoc Faculty Survey Committee, all containing graduate student representatives.

GEO

PSGSA participates in the the Graduate Employees' Organization (GEO) through the Stewards Council. The GEO is the University's sole bargaining agent representing Illinois' TAs and GAs. It is the official venue through which TAs and GAs can negotiate with the University over healthcare, wages, and other working conditions. The GEO also hosts social activities, like Contracts & Coffee, throughout the semester.

Prospective Visits

The Visits Committee aids the Director of Graduate Studies in arranging itineraries for visiting admitted students in the spring. This includes placing visitors in host homes if desired, arranging informal one-on-one and group meals and social events with current students, and managing the budgets for the visits.

Surveys

The Survey Committee is responsible for designing and administering all surveys for the PSGSA. These surveys gather information regarding ways to improve various aspects of the graduate program, teaching appointment preferences, prospective student visits, and more.

Grievance

The grievance committee convenes in the event a student in the department brings forth a formal grievance, working in conjunction with the faculty committee members to settle the dispute.

Training and Mentorship

Math Camp

Math Camp is a week-long program that covers core topics in calculus and probability, as well as introduce basics of R programming, to help first-year Ph.D. students succeed in graduate methods courses in the department and elsewhere.

Mentorship Program

The PSGSA Mentorship Program pairs each first-year student with two current-student mentors. Mentors offer their tips on how to choose and prep for classes, how to approach appointments, and general advice and support as first-year students make their way through the year in the program.

PSGSA Series

The PSGSA Series includes workshops and discussions about teaching, methods, graduate life, service, and graduate research in other disciplines. This Series also includes the Methods Workshop, which focuses on providing students with additional methods training on specific topics.

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Projects Fall 2019 - Spring 2020

Resources for Grad Students

This year, we are continuing to update and maintain the following, hosted on the PSGSA website:

- A repository of outside classes taken by our grad students
- A repository of fellowships won by our grad students
- A repository of teaching materials by our grad students
- A primer on how to address Title VII and Title IX issues
- A First-Year Welcome Package

Over the summer, we added:

- A dataset of current graduate student research interests, for use in finding project collaborators

This semester, we are launching:

- A job market materials repository

Fundraising

The PSGSA will arrange one fundraising event per semester. Funds will be used to supplement department funding for the PSGSA Seminar Series, with the possibility of providing limited funds for student conference travel and/or registration.

Alumni Relations

The PSGSA will actively work with the DGS and Head to develop a directory of alumni for current student use, as well as launching a mentorship program at MPSA 2020.

Social Activities

Social Activities

We organize social, leisure, and recreational activities for graduate students.

Sports Activities

We organize sports teams and games for graduate students.

Group Volunteer Events

This year, the PSGSA will plan group volunteer events to offer students the chance to contribute to the local community.

Joint Student/Faculty Activities

The PSGSA will actively plan joint student/faculty events each semester to encourage interaction outside of the classroom. Additionally, we are exploring the possibility of developing a physical space for student-faculty collaboration and/or interaction in the department.

Communications

We aim to actively disseminate information. To provide an overview of our annual activities, the PSGSA will send out a newsletter at the start of the fall semester and the end of the spring semester. Additionally, a Town Hall meeting in January will gather feedback and suggestions from students. To celebrate and share our own academic projects, we post publications on the 4th floor hallway bulletin board. We also update the 410 bulletin board with our current activities.

Check out the PSGSA website at publish.illinois.edu/poliscigsa. This includes an **anonymous feedback form** for your comments or suggestions.

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PSGSA Mission Statement

The mission of the PSGSA is to enhance the academic, professional, and social experience of the Illinois Political Science graduate students by:

- Providing training events, academic resources, and mentorship to graduate students;
- Organizing social and sports activities;
- Facilitating channels for feedback and representing graduate students in discussions with the department;
- Disseminating information about the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) and university resources; and
- Working with the department leadership to promote a respectful and uplifting work environment for all graduate students.

PSGSA Decision-Making

Decision Type	Decision Procedures
Representation (ex. Department asks for graduate student representative for an important departmental decision) Board elections	Graduate student body vote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For votes with candidates, candidates are self-nominated or determined according to the relevant criteria • Anonymous voting fielded by Illinois web survey • Runoff if more than one candidate • Majority wins • President chairs vote
Committee chairs (2 terms max)	Board vote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anonymous vote • Majority wins • President chairs vote
Committee members	No vote
Activities to initiate, continue, or discontinue	Board vote or committee vote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anonymous vote • Majority wins • President or committee chair chairs vote
Tie breaking	Applies to both Board and student body votes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When there is a tie, re-run the vote, with the options being the nominees that received the most votes • If another tie of the same individuals results, use R to randomly choose one of the two people