



## **Faculty Meeting Report Fall 2021**

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The Graduate Student Association's (GSA) mission is to provide a student forum for discussion of common needs, cooperate with the faculty and administration to build a recognized and respected institution, and develop student fellowship. Since the last faculty meeting, GSA has successfully completely, continued, or launched several initiatives that align with our missions. These include:

#### **GSA Elections**

The election cycle for the GSA positions were conducted in August via poll submitted to student body. Due to an overwhelming number of student nominees for the Student InterCouncil (SIC) GSA representative position, a separate election cycle was held for this position and Mary Fuentes was named as the GSA SIC rep. in addition to Sonia Patel, who will be serving as VP this year and Swati Mohapatra, who is continuing in her service. Since there was only one nominee each for the remaining positions, nominees were announced in the Essential on August 1<sup>st</sup>. The transition period is currently underway.

#### **Peer-Mentoring Program**

Surveys were sent out to incoming students (courtesy of Karen Weinberg) and current students, and peers matched accordingly. After the matching process, we encourage the current students to reach out and establish contact with their respective incoming students. The GSA intends to organize a formal meet and greet event for the peer-mentoring program in the first term, although specifics will be influenced by changing restrictions in the face of COVID.

#### **GSBS Orientation Week**

During Orientation Week for the incoming class, the GSA gave a presentation introducing ourselves to the new students, in addition to discussing tips and advice on surviving graduate school as well as how to survive and thrive in the general Houston area. This presentation included directions on how to deal with inclement weather, as well as practical advice on choosing a mentor and degree program.

#### **Future initiatives and events**

The GSA is remaining vigilant in the face of COVID, and maintaining constant contact with the administration in terms of current restrictions and limitations. We will continue to plan our events in such a way that promotes a feeling of inclusivity and support while simultaneously encouraging health and safety measures.

#### **September**

Popsicle handout

#### **October**

Peer-mentoring Outing

#### **November**

Mental Health Week

#### **December**

## Celebratory Holiday Event

### **January**

Photo/caption contest (Possible collaboration with Science Writing Group)

GSA would like to thank the Deans, faculty, and GSBS staff for their continued support, assistance and encouragement. Together we will continue to make GSBS the best graduate school for our students. **If there are any recommendations for future events or initiatives, please email me at [rjmorgan@mdanderson.org](mailto:rjmorgan@mdanderson.org)**

Sincerely,

### **2021-2022 GSA Officers**

President: Rian Morgan

Vice President: Vidhi Chandra

Secretary: Shraddha Subramanian

Treasurer: Mabel Perez-Oquendo