

### **Spring 2020 Report**

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 (Sep 2019), GSA has successfully completely, continued, or launched several initiatives that align with our missions. These include:

#### **GSA Peer Mentorship Program for First-Year Students (Continuing)**

To help the first-year students settle down in Houston, GSA pairs them with current students based on research interests. The pairing begins in the summer to provide incoming students a point of contact to assist with their move to Houston and their transition to graduate school.

This year GSA received **record-high participation rate** from the current students:

Current students signed up for mentorship: **70**

First-year students signed up for the program: **64**

Mentors and mentees were introduced to each other during orientation week. In the fall semester, GSA hosts a thanksgiving pie social to provide an opportunity for mentors and mentees to interact. GSA will host another social event for peer mentoring program in the spring.

#### **GSBS Housing Survey (Continuing)**

GSA will conduct another annual anonymous housing survey among current GSBS students and publish this data for incoming and current students. Our efforts in housing survey have been well appreciated by the incoming and current students. This is also an opportunity for GSA to gather feedbacks from all students on the issues regarding UT Housing and recreational center.

#### **GSA Halloween Pumpkin Carving Contest**

GSA host our first Halloween pumpkin carving contest. Student participants and GSBS staff judges all had great fun!



### **UTHealth Email Space Limit Issue**

GSA has sent out an anonymous survey regarding the storage space limit in our student UTHealth email account. This issue has been repeatedly brought up by students to GSA officers in our social events. GSA will analyze the survey data at the beginning of February 2020 and organize the information for the Deans to help our students resolve this IT issue. So far GSA has received **144** completed survey responses.

### **UTHealth Shuttle Issue in Rush Hours**

GSA has received complaints about the low frequency of UTHealth shuttles during rush hours, especially the Express shuttles. GSA will create a survey to glean feedback from all students and evaluate the needs for further actions.

### **Career Development:**

#### *Introduction of local networking organization Eventure*

We have invited our past president, Robert Williams, who served as the director of Eventure, which is a successful local biomedical networking organization. In Robert's seminar, students were introduced to the following opportunities available at Eventure:

- Biomedical product/question-drive consulting opportunities
- Seminars on regulatory affairs in biotech
- Patent law seminars
- Entrepreneurship workshops

GSA will seek for another speaker for a career development seminar in spring semester.

### **Future events**

#### **February**

UTHealth Shuttle Survey

UTHealth Email Space Limit Survey

#### **March**

Candidacy Exam Preparation

Pet Therapy

#### **April**

GSA Spring Townhall

GSA Officer Elections for 2020-2021

#### **May**

Tentative career seminar

Tentative mental health seminar

#### **June**

GSA Summer Social with Undergraduate Summer Students

Begin handoff to GSA Officers for the next year

#### **July**

GSA Photography Competition + Ice-cream Social

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 [yjiang8@mdanderson.org](mailto:yjiang8@mdanderson.org)**

Sincerely,

**2019-2020 GSA Officers**

President: Wayne Yingda Jiang

Vice President: Ilena Corsi

Treasurer: Malcolm Moses

Secretary: Anchit Bhagat