To: Lynn Sniffen, Office of the Secretary  
From: Maher Zamel, GAPSA Chair  
Re: GAPSA University Council Status Report for March 2, 2011

GAPSA Recreation Fee

GAPSA Chair Maher Zamel and the GAPSA community are very pleased with the outcome of the Recreation fee changes that will take effect later this year. The graduate and professional community would like to thank the University administration and the Graduate Student Center, Office of the Provost, and the University President Dr. Gutmann for their continuous support. The GAPSA Recreation Facility Survey results will be posted up on the GAPSA website before the end of March 2011.

GAPSA Finance Committee:

Over the last several months, the Finance Committee has been continuing with its oversight of the GAPSA budget, checking to ensure that each committee and council is staying on budget and that expenses do not exceed revenue. To that end, we must compare each vice chair’s account records with the Office of Student Life’s records of transactions. In addition, this oversight entails closely scrutinizing travel and research grant reimbursements received by individual students to make sure that students are not being over-reimbursed. I am happy to report that all of our internal accounts appear to be on par with our expectations.

During the past couple of months, the Finance Committee has also been soliciting and reviewing student group applications. Each semester, we fund student groups across the university to the tune of some $25,000-30,000. We were excited about our latest results: we received 68 applications for student group funding for the spring of 2011, a 120 percent increase from this point in time last year. This reflects our increasing visibility across campus.

GAPSA Committee on Student Life:

This semester, GAPSA Committee on Student Life established a Health 101 lecture series with the help of Student Health. The lecture series will bring in different speakers and focus on a number of themes such as nutrition, stress management, and student health.

Professional Student Council

Over the past two months the Professional Council has given out over 40 travel grants, with over 100 given out over the academic year. Our students will be traveling to conferences all over the United States, and even some as far away as China. Several academic events have also been funded that will be taking place in the next few weeks, including the Muslim Law Students Association’s annual conference, and a conversation that will be part of Penn’s spring events. We have successfully drawn members from our body that will sit on both the President’s Award committee, as well as the committee that gives out the Provost’s Interdisciplinary Award. We
expect to fund at least 20 more travel grants and a few more academic events before the close of the academic year.

University Council Committee on Diversity and Equity

The UC D&E committee is focusing this year on faculty diversity, a faculty climate survey, continuous monitoring of issues related to D&E, and other things. The Graduate Student Life Survey administered and owned by GAPSA was presented to the UC D&E. It contains some demographic data, but it was generally agreed that graduate student diversity issues, including any data, are mostly handled at the school or center level, rather than the university level.

These are just a few highlights of GAPSA’s work during the Fall, please see our reports section on our website for additional information. www.gapsa.upenn.edu