February 12, 2020 – Graduate Student Advisory Board
Meeting minutes:

• Intros: 1:30-1:41

• Recap of ground rules: 1:41-1:45
  o Current list
    ▪ Take space, make space
    ▪ Use “I” statements
    ▪ Confidentiality
    ▪ Respect / call in, not out
    ▪ Embody fearlessness & challenge power
    ▪ Impact > intent
  o Everyone’s happy with current list, but Sean notes that these are flexible

• SAB scope: 1:46-1:59
  o Recap of what SAB did last year
    ▪ Mostly an avenue for PMA grad students to communicate w administration (almost entirely through Sofie)
  o Nikita: what’s the scope of liaison with admin? Nam: pretty flexible
    ▪ Nam has a standing regular meeting with Fiona
    ▪ Can also do our own calls to action, call our own general meetings w PMA grads, meet with Fiona directly, etc.
  o Goals?
    ▪ Mia: Try to bring division closer together — community engagement committee could aim to hold one division-wide event per term?
    ▪ Sean: Try to get everyone more engaged, collaborate as a collective to make changes ourselves rather than necessarily depending on top-down change
      ▪ Nikita: Agree but would like to have more specific action items (transparency in academics, etc.)
    ▪ Summary from Sean: get feedback from PMA grad students and use that to come up with actionable campaigns
  o PMA town hall from last year
    ▪ Dillon explains how GSC Advocacy Committee worked to set up division-level town halls
    ▪ Duxing: Can we get town hall report before next meeting?
  o Nam recaps reasoning for mission statement

• Items for upcoming meetings: 2:00-2:14
  o Meeting with Fiona:
    ▪ Duxing: communicate our mission statement, ask how can we get engaged? how can we have a voice in decision-making process?
    ▪ Nikita: how much leverage do we really have? what’s our scope?
      ▪ Mia: can we actually trust admin to tell us what our scope is?
      ▪ Dillon: we should aim for bottom-up type change
      ▪ Nam: aim for happy medium — explain our mission and goals, and ask how we can work together w administration
• Ashay: issue of transparency — has anything been done since our last meeting with Fiona?
  ▪ Dillon: specifically, transparency with faculty hires? anonymous comment form after speaker lunches?
  ▪ Nam: Fiona tends to work better with specific action items
    ▪ Mia: recap of some specific action items from last year
  ▪ Sean: need to close feedback loop, make sure we come back to future town halls with updates from our meetings with Fiona
    ▪ Nikita: one of the biggest issues is follow-up
  ▪ Ashay: bringing up practices other institutions have?

• Prospective visits: 2:15-2:24
  o Shruti: had some students contact directly (via email) to discuss personal experiences as a woman/international student/etc.
  o Nam: from staff side, useful to have some representatives
  o Sean: from our side, hopefully want to recruit people who might come here & be engaged
    ▪ Dillon: prospective visits are a good way to recruit people
  o Individual visits
    ▪ Astro - we’re already set, astro grads will cover this
    ▪ Physics - can have SAB reps introduce themselves at an event
      ▪ Sean: pins or T-shirts??
    ▪ Math - ????

• Bringing up concerns with faculty: 2:25-2:27
  o Nam: some student concerns about who to go to if you have concerns (even re: academics, not necessarily Title IX/equity) about specific faculty
    ▪ Majority of SAB in attendance feel this is prevalent
    ▪ At least half of SAB in attendance don’t actually know who to go to
      ▪ Nam: in immediate future, can always come to me, Mika; in longer-term future, want to have more structural avenues
  o Fiona wants to have another lunch (in the spring)!

• Respect is a part of research (RPR) workshop: 2:28-2:30
  o Mia: recap of what RPR is, and what we’re trying to do here at Caltech
  o Recruited Ashay, Dillon, Sean

• We still need a vice chair! Send email if you’re interested

Action items:

• **Dillon**: send town hall report/notes
• **Ashay**: write draft mission statement
• **Mia**: send specific action items from previous SAB meeting
• **Astro grads**: figure out how to get SAB reps on prospective visit
• **Preksha**: make pin design
• **Sean**: get pins made, volunteer to go to Physics/Math prospective visits
• **Everyone**: connect with committees!