GSSDAC Meeting Summary
November 11, 2011

Attendees:

Alex Betancourt
Mahmoud Boutaam
Heather Davis

Balin Loftus
Tonya Vance

GALLERY HOP

The group brainstormed better ways to advertise future events, noting the low graduate student response. **FOLLOW-UP**: Tonya Vance volunteered to seek approval to send the flyer to the departmental assistants. The group discussed the stops on the history tour and other logistical considerations. Balin and Mahmoud volunteered to lead the group from Coffea to downtown. Mahmoud will take photos which can be used to publicize the GSSDAC. Heather will create a follow up press release about the event, as well. The group members shared phone numbers and (**FOLLOW-UP**) Heather will send an email about specifics to the organizers next week, as well as an email to participants before the event with directions and parking info, etc. Balin shared art hop brochures which he and Mahmoud will bring to the event on the 18th.

**Post-meeting note**: Tonya sent the flyer to the departmental admins and since then, our numbers have doubled. We need to find a way to get the message out to all graduate students in order to meet their needs.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES IN LEXINGTON SCHOOLS

Tonya Vance shared opportunities explored in talking with Tanya Torp from the United Way. Tanya recommended working with William Wells Brown elementary school and community center at 5th and Shropshire. The students are mostly low-income, primarily African-American and they don’t have a “global worldview.” Guests are not allowed in the school during school hours for a variety of reasons, but there is an after school program weekdays from 2:30 – 8:00 p.m. run by Jill Wilson of Lexington Parks and Rec. **FOLLOW-UP**: Tonya will contact Tanya to find out how many children attend the after school program, at which hours is peak attendance and when/if parents use the center.

Opportunities and regulations.

- Jill’s rules for volunteers are (1) leave the place better than you found it and (2) they have no money for materials, so you have to bring everything in.
- All programming needs to be interactive, activity-based. There is a kitchen and a gym, but cooking instruction is limited to 15 students.
- Tanya Torp and Tonya Vance are both sources for help with ideas.
- Children attach to volunteers quickly, so a schedule needs to be established and maintained so as not to disappoint the children.
- Tanya also suggested that the center could be open on Saturday or an evening for an “international night.”
- She further said that the United Way might collaborate with us or we could collaborate with other groups for a big event.
If we “give” items away, there needs to be an educational component. For instance, if we collected bikes, we’d have to also give helmets and safety classes. If, however, we wanted to collect winter coats (needed), then we would not need to attach an educational component. The coats would be donated to the school’s resource center and could include both children’s and adult sizes.

Alex and others really liked the idea of starting with a coat drive. The group discussed and decided they would sponsor a coat drive immediately with a final collection and delivery date of December 2. **FOLLOW-UP:** Tonya agreed to share the info with the grad student list-serv; Alex and Heather will create a sign; Heather will get the info out to the grad school PR person, as well as to the grad student org presidents.

The group shared different ideas for programming and decided that it would like to plan an event/s for April 2012, developing those events in the spring. **FOLLOW-UP:** A service subcommittee should be created to manage event planning.

FYI: Contact Info for Tanya Torp – United Way – 859-967-1926 – tanya.torp@uwbg.org

**DIVERSIFYING THE GRAD SCHOOL WEBSITE**

Recently, Heather attended a conference which included a presentation on marketing to international students. Out of the talk, she thought the grad school website could benefit from a welcome message in multiple languages (Mahmoud volunteered to translate Arabic and French), a map of the US with Lexington’s location noted (Balin suggested banks and airlines for maps), and some of Lexington’s best kept secrets (Heather will fix “wildcat”). The group discussed other opportunities including non-Facebook social networking and a set of power points Undergraduate Ed developed (contact: Brian Troyer). **FOLLOW-UP:** Heather will contact Brian Troyer for copies of the power points.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Alex will be December’s grad student spotlight. **FOLLOW-UP:** Heather will contact Alex soon for bio info and photo. Heather will also ask about adding a student archive page to highlight the diversity and accomplishments of UK’s grad student population.

The group will next meet in January 2012.