The Graduate Assembly Welcomes New Grads to Campus

Every year, campus welcomes around 4,000 new academic and professional graduate students. In coordination with Graduate Division and the LEAD Center, the GA welcomed new members of our community this year by participating in departmental introductions, New Graduate Student Orientation (NGSO), and GradFest. Afterwards, the GA hosted a graduate student social event at Raleigh’s on Telegraph.

Berkeley’s graduate students join over 100 degree programs in almost as many departments. Each of those departments - from the largest professional schools to the smallest academic units - provides orientation meetings and materials to their students. The GA visits these orientations to highlight the existence of resources across campus for students in all programs, and to encourage graduate students with suggestions for improving campus to contact us and get involved.

In addition, many incoming students attend NGSO - which started as a GA project. This year’s theme was belonging - both Grad Div Dean Lisa Garcia Bedolla’s and the GA’s welcoming remarks emphasized that experiencing self doubt is about the most graduate student thing you can do, and that we are committed to the success of every graduate student who comes to campus. In addition, new grads were able to attend a variety of information sessions (including one on the GA itself) and get linked up to resources for thriving in their programs.

In the afternoon, the GA tabled at GradFest, collecting feedback from incoming students on advocacy items that are their highest priority. It came as no surprise that the single most important issue faced by incoming students was securing safe, affordable housing. The GA continues to advocate across campus for the construction of additional housing and for resources that support housing searches for incoming students.

Finally, the GA’s Graduate Social Club hosted the GA’s first social event of the year. One of the best things about being involved in an organization like the GA is the opportunity to meet
brilliant and interesting people from all across campus. The GSC’s mission is to provide opportunities for grads to relax and meet each other, build connections outside their own departments, and generally have fun.

The GA is grateful to everyone who organized, assisted, presented, and volunteered for NGSO, GradFest, and the year’s many orientation activities. We welcome feedback on how to make the experience even more useful next year.