The Graduate Assembly Hosts Its First Delegate Meeting of 2019-2020

On Thursday, September 12th, 2019, one hundred academic and professional graduate students from across U.C. Berkeley’s graduate degree programs met for the first Graduate Assembly Delegate meeting of the 2019-2020 academic year.¹

The Graduate Assembly (GA) is U.C. Berkeley’s graduate student government - the only organization on campus advocating exclusively for the wellbeing of the campus’s 12,000 graduate students.² In this pursuit the GA annually advocates both on campus and externally to raise awareness of and promote solutions to barriers to graduate student success. The GA also funds social and professional development programming that brings together students from a multitude of backgrounds and disciplines.

The first meeting of the year began with introductions. The GA’s Project Directors - the leaders of the GA’s focused advocacy and community building programs³ - presented their ideas and plans for the year. ASUC President Amma Sarkodee-Adoo and GA Wellness Center staff members Amy Honigman (CAPS) and Alvero Gomex (DSP) also introduced themselves.⁴ Delegates were brought up to speed on the work accomplished by the executive board over the summer, and passed their first resolution of the year.⁵

The evening ended with breakout sessions for the GA’s advocacy goals for the coming year. Every year, the GA Delegates decide on an advocacy agenda. This year, a brief survey was circulated to graduate students across campus to determine what issues were most important to address. Campus Affairs Vice President, Maria Pettis, reported on the results of this survey; the top five most important issues identified were: 1) Affordable Housing, 2) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, 3) Wellness and Mental Health, 4) Financial Support, and 5) SVSH prevention and

¹ See agenda and materials [here](https://ga.berkeley.edu/about/).
² See [https://ga.berkeley.edu/about/](https://ga.berkeley.edu/about/).
³ See [https://ga.berkeley.edu/projects/](https://ga.berkeley.edu/projects/) (introductions will be posted soon).
⁴ For more information on the GA Wellness Center, see [GA Wellness Press Release](https://ga.berkeley.edu/about/)
⁵ Resolution [1909A](https://ga.berkeley.edu/about/).
Title IX compliance. Delegates broke out into smaller groups to articulate short- and long-term goals to work towards on each of these issues.

The official advocacy agenda will be finalized and voted on for approval at the next Delegate Assembly meeting on October 3rd, 2019. October’s meeting will also feature presentations by the new Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate Division, Lisa Garcia Bedolla, to discuss her plans for the year, and a representative from University Health Services, to discuss recent changes to student health insurance coverage.

All delegates meetings are open to the public and take place on the first Thursday of the month starting at 5:30 p.m. in the Eshleman Hall Senate Chambers.

If you are a graduate student and know about an issue that the GA should work on, please contact your Delegate (see https://ga.berkeley.edu/delegates/). If your department does not have a Delegate, please contact the GA’s Internal Vice President (internal-ga@berkeley.edu) to get one.

The mission of the Graduate Assembly is to improve the lives of University of California, Berkeley graduate students and to foster a vibrant, inclusive graduate student community. For further information, please contact Adam Orford, GA President (president-ga@berkeley.edu).