
GAPSA International Student Council Minutes October 21, 2008

The first International Council meeting was held on October 21, 2008 in the Graduate Student Center.

Here is a summary of the meeting:

The International Council will be working on focus areas most important to the international graduate student population. Each focus area will be addressed with a two-pronged strategy. Firstly, we will understand the issues related to the area and propose at least two possible solutions. Secondly, we will provide incentives to the university administration for implementing our plans. Our plans should highlight potential benefits to both the international students and the university as a whole. Based on the discussions in the meeting, there are three areas that we will focus on in the year.

Employment

- Facilitate international students in finding on-campus and off-campus jobs in a more practical and effective manner
- Working together with Career Services and Alumni Relations to establish contact with International Alumni
- Introduce a mentoring program that would allow current International Students to interact with International Alumni working full-time inside the US
- Using resources of schools (e.g. Wharton) that have been more successful in addressing such issues

Financial Aid

- Working on a solution that would allow international students to obtain loans easily. Explore the possibility of the university acting as a co-signer with the student
- Searching for any grants/funding available to international students

Cultural Integration

- Organizing events/programs that would allow exchange of cross-cultural information between local and international students
- Creating a guide for international students that would provide information about different aspects of campus life
- Participating in the community to make more people aware of the huge international student population at Penn

The International Council requests that the Penn delegation collect the following information at the IVY summit.

1. Do the Career Services at other IVY universities have any international student



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- specific programs?
2. What sort of programs do they have for maintaining regular contact with International Alumni?
 3. Are the International Alumni at these universities actively involved in providing donations? If so, what are some of the incentives provided to them to encourage such donations?
 4. What are some of the loan options provided to the international students at other IVY universities? Is any one of them willing to act as a co-signer?
 5. What is the setup of International Student organizations at these universities? Is there a common forum for them? Are they well integrated?
 6. Are there any cultural outreach programs that involve international students?

Submitted by

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