

Members of the Board,

To open I'd like to add one more welcome to our new trustees, and convey our thanks to our outgoing Chairman. With the Senate in recess for the summer I don't have an official resolution of appreciation for you, but I think I speak for all of us when I say thank you for your leadership.

As I was unable to attend the last meeting, I'd also like to take a moment to introduce myself— my name is Blake Hylton, a PhD candidate in Mechanical Engineering, and President of the Graduate Student Government. My core officer team, most of whom are here today, includes our Vice President for External Affairs Chris Kulesza, working towards a PhD in Political Science and Masters in Psychology, Vice President for Internal Affairs Anna Josephson, doctoral student in Agricultural Economics, Secretary Alex Bruce, doctoral student in Materials, and Treasurer Yang Liu, doctoral student in Electrical and Computer Engineering. On behalf of the entire graduate community, thank you all for this opportunity to speak.

I will focus my remarks this afternoon on our core initiatives for the coming year. Embodied in our most recent two-year strategic plan, our goals may be summarized as the betterment of graduate quality of life, increased integration into the larger campus community, and greater visibility of graduate needs and concerns among university leadership.

On the issue of quality of life, we will carry forward the ongoing graduate space initiative and see that project through to the finish. With input from the graduate school and other units around campus, we plan to establish an annual survey of graduate students, leveraging those results into a regular report on graduate quality of life, to be provided to this body among others. We will also advocate for such initiatives as the strategic inclusion of graduate assistantships and fellowships in upcoming fundraising campaigns.

On campus integration, we hope to continue building our relationships with PSG leadership, our new Student Trustee, and other student leaders across campus. Through these relationships we aim to establish new programs and services, leveraging our collective resources to more effectively serve the larger community.

Finally, on the general idea of advocating for graduate interests, we will continue reaching out to members of the Board, Administration, and other constituencies around campus, raising awareness and soliciting assistance where needed. We will also advocate for such changes as the incorporation of graduate program rankings, graduate-centric metrics and statistics, and other such indicators into regular, high-level reports such as those presented here today.

I'll conclude by noting that great progress has already been made on each of these initiatives, but that it is our challenge this year to carry that momentum forward. We look forward to working with you in the coming year.