

**Graduate Representative Organization
Budget Request
2009–2010 Academic Year**

Graduate Representative Organization

Budget Request

2009–2010 Academic Year

Overview

GRO Main Account

2007-2008 Amounts Requested	2008-2009 Amount Requested	2009-2010 Amount Requested	Item
\$20,000	\$15,000	\$13,000	GRO Happy Hour
10,500	15,650	18,000	GRO Coffee Hour
7,000	10,000	7,000	Social Programming
8,500	7,500	6,500	<i>The Grad News</i>
16,000	19,000	18,000	Campus Group Funding
14,000	20,000	17,000	Payroll
2,600	3,000	4,500	Meetings
2,000	2,000	500	Office
2,000	2,300	2,000	NAGPS
2,500	2,600	1,000	Promotional items
200	200	200	Mentoring
700	1,000	1,300	Summer Sports League
6,000	6,000	6,000	Conference Grants
\$92,000	\$104,250	\$97,000	GRO Main Account

GPSA Week

\$9,000 **GPSA Week**

Graduate Student Orientation

\$7,500 **Graduate Student Orientation**

GRO Guide

\$6,500 **GRO Guide**

Detailed Explanation of Budget Items

GRO Main Account

GRO Happy Hour	Amount Requested: \$13,000
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$15,000
Expenses to date (July 2008—May 2009)	\$10,260
Estimated expense for full year	\$11,860

The GRO Happy Hour is a bi-weekly event during the academic year. The GRO Happy Hour brings graduate students together in a relaxing setting in a location proximal to the Homewood campus. Every Happy Hour features free food and drink specials. The event is well attended by graduate students every week; it is in many ways the cornerstone of GRO's efforts to build a graduate student community. Attendance at the Happy Hour has increased steadily over the past few years and now routinely exceeds 100 graduate students each week. Due to the increased interest and attendance at the coffee hours, we are shifting some funding from the biweekly happy hour to the weekly coffee hour.

Because we have significantly cut back on our summer GRO Happy Hours, we are requesting a smaller amount of funding for this purpose than previous years, although we are ordering an increased amount of food due to increased attendance. We intend to continue to shift our venue every month in the upcoming year.

GRO Coffee Hour	Amount Requested: \$18,000
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$15,650
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$15,580
Estimated expense for full year	\$18,580

The GRO Coffee Hour is a weekly event held in the Levering Lounge (formerly the Hop Stop), featuring free coffee and cookies for graduate students. Attendance regularly exceeds 200 and can reach 400 graduate students each week. We use this effective outreach as a way to contact graduate students, and to inform them of upcoming events and advocacy issues. Because this event takes place on campus, many graduate students report that this is an excellent way to meet other grad students from outside their departments.

Based upon the successful model of last year's GRO Coffee Hour and increased food costs, we will spend \$450 per week on this event during the academic year, and will run the event for 29 weeks during the academic year. In addition, and due to high demand, we will provide a reduced-service coffee hour during the intersession and summer months at a cost of \$250 per week. Because of the continuation of our extended offerings and increasing food costs we are requesting an increase of approximately \$2,500 over what we spent last year, which we have shifted over from last year's Happy Hour budget. Working with the owner of Carma's Cafe, Carma, we have been receiving discounted services. Because of this, we have been able to expand Coffee Hour as attendance has increased. We remain extremely happy with the results and the quality of the coffee and cookies.

Social Programming	Amount Requested: \$7,000
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$10,000
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$5,233
Estimated expense for full year	\$7,000

The GRO is largely responsible for graduate student social programming, and the social events that we plan give grad students a feeling of community, and a basis for interaction across disciplinary boundaries. Activities have included 2 bus trips to New York City, a bus trip to Ocean City, Harper's Ferry (rafting), Atlantic City, and two wine tasting events. We have also continued Bonus Happy Hours, at which we have consistently high attendance, and sufficient food for the event.

Next year we would like to hold a number of social events to benefit the university community. We will also continue to conduct our bus trips to New York, and maintain the other events in which graduate students are consistently interested. We will also be holding a bus trip to go skiing at a nearby resort during the winter months. The wine tastings that we have held over the past few years have been particularly successful, and we will certainly hold another one in the coming year to the benefit of our graduate student community.

<i>The Grad News</i>	Amount Requested: \$6,500
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$7,500
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$1,637
Estimated expense for full year	\$4,637

The Grad News is a monthly publication of the GRO. It features articles written by graduate students on academic and social concerns, covering topics including changes in academic policy, administrative decisions and new hires, issues relevant to international students and non-resident student. Our publication also highlights local 'Baltimore Treasures,' restaurant and film reviews, and carries announcements from campus groups. *The Grad News* can be viewed online by following the link for it from <www.jhu.edu/gro>.

The quality of *The Grad News* has increased steadily through this past academic year. Next year, we wish to maintain this level of excellence, and increased reporting on issues that affect graduate students.

This past year to contain costs we kept the printing of *The Grad News* at University Printing Services and planned to print 8 issues over the year at a cost of \$600 per issue. The cost of raw materials is rising and may affect this charge over the course of the 2008-09 academic year. Although we rely on a number of graduate student volunteers to write articles of social and academic concern, to feature in *The Grad News*, payroll for the editor, assistant editor, and guest reviewers contributes further to the cost of each issue. We are cutting back on the publication costs by reducing the print run and "greening" the *News*, seeking to use recycled paper.

Over the past year, the GRO considered making *The Grad News* available online each month, so that we could reduce the number of printed copies. As a cost-cutting measure, we will not seek to hire an assistant editor for the upcoming year.

Campus Group Funding	Amount Requested: \$18,000
Budgeted for 2008-2009	16,000
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$12,745
Estimated expense for full year	\$14,000

The GRO has historically allocated about \$15,000 per year for the funding of activities and events on Homewood campus, though in recent years we have been granted a lesser amount for group funding. Over the last couple of years we were approved for \$13,000 for this purpose, with an additional \$3,000 for student travel grants. We are thankful for this amount. This year, we would like to request an increase of \$4,000, so we will have \$18,000 to put towards the support of graduate student campus groups, which benefits the graduate student community *and* the Homewood campus community at large. We have seen an increasing number of requests by campus groups – including requests from graduate student groups which wish to hold interdisciplinary academic conferences on campus. Apparently, it is due to lessening amounts of funding within academic departments that graduate students have been approaching the GRO with increased requests to finance their academic events. This is in addition to the usual requests we receive from groups requesting our sponsorship for cultural, social, athletic and community service programming – most of which are deserving of the funding that we offer, considering the many services that they offer to our community. Additionally, we feel the \$5,000 increase is justifiable in light of the discontinuation of the Dean’s Community Grant fund of \$10,000; student groups which received funding from this source over the past two years will now turn to the GRO for support.

In the past, we reallocated funds to make up the difference for the funds needed to adequately sponsor campus student groups. For instance, in 2004-05 we sponsored graduate student groups in an amount totaling \$17,418 by reallocating certain funds. Last year we were able to repeat this on a limited basis. As such, we would like to request funds in the amount of \$16,000 for group funding, for the reasons listed above. Moreover, over the past few years, the number of funding requests received has risen significantly, largely due to the Student Activities Commission (SAC)’s and Recreation Sports Office’s recommendations to groups that they seek partial funding from the GRO. The GRO allows funding for items rejected by the SAC, such as sponsoring speakers and equipment costs, making us a unique and important funding source for campus groups. The Recreation Sports Office views the GRO as an important source of funding for sports teams with graduate student members.

Along with events of campus-wide interest traditionally sponsored by the GRO (such as the Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA)’s biannual events, Indian Graduate Student Association, and the Johns Hopkins Symposium on Foreign Affairs), we receive requests for research symposiums (such as the Milton S. Eisenhower Symposium and the Near Eastern Studies Anshe Lecture) and for events that are organized by undergraduate groups but may also appeal to the graduate population. These events encourage interaction between graduate and undergraduate students, and enhance the quality of life of the student body on campus.

Additionally, the GRO provides grants of \$150 for interdepartmental graduate student social events (for example, for the Romance Languages Department to have a Halloween Party with the Philosophy Department). These events are well-received, successful, and directly in line with the GRO mission of fostering graduate student interaction. Though a commonly heard complaint about the current state of the graduate student community had been that students don’t know

anyone outside of their department, with this program we have begun to effectively address this concern, and will continue to do so.

In 2008-09, the GRO approved 23 group funding requests from 19 groups. The total amount awarded was \$12, 744.23.

Payroll	Requested Amount: \$18,000
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$17,000
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$14,026
Estimated expenses for full year	\$16,000

We would like to maintain our requested amount for payroll from this past year at \$20,000. The GRO accomplishes a great many things on behalf of the Hopkins community, including organizing community-building social events, disseminating important information to graduate students, continuing to negotiate the relationship with our insurance provider, maintaining a website that provides an accessible clearinghouse of necessary information for graduate students (both current and prospective), maintaining our endowment to fund our programs, running athletic leagues, arranging graduate student orientation, assisting with TA training, and overseeing the finances of several graduate student organizations. Most importantly, the GRO works closely with administrators in the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences and the Whiting School of Engineering to suggest ways to improve academic policy, grievance procedures, and to field various graduate concerns to ensure that these matters are brought to the attention of the Deans and other university administrators. Through the GRO's working relationship with various university administrators we collaboratively improve graduate student life at Hopkins. The work that the GRO does includes the sorts of administrative tasks that university staff typically gets paid to do.

Moreover, in representing the concerns of graduate students across the Homewood campus, especially insofar as we handle conflicts over shifting academic policies that affect graduate students, the GRO in many ways serves as a substitute for a union; indeed, we feel that having a strong organization to represent graduate student concerns is preferable to having a union, given how responsive JHU's administration has been to the GRO. While we estimate that our expenses for payroll this year will be \$18,000, we estimate—conservatively—that the small numbers of GRO members who hold paid positions are able to bill less than half of the hours they actually worked, due to current limitations of the GRO payroll. This was the case for the past few years. We want to be able to fairly pay GRO members who are doing work that exceeds the reasonable expectations for a volunteer and allow them to report their hours fairly. We wish to allocate additional hours for several of the existing positions, since many of the individuals occupying these positions have been, and will likely continue to be quite active in their roles. Also, conversations with Hopkins deans last year concluded in agreement that the chair and co-chair should be – at minimum – be allocated twice as many hours of remunerable work (from 250 to 500 hours), if not placed on a semester-long stipend by the Krieger and Whiting Schools.

Please also consider that universities of a similar caliber to Johns Hopkins (MIT for instance) have graduate student associations that employ two staff members to do work comparable to that of the GRO. Furthermore, some of our GRO members work with the JHU undergraduate

Student Council to improve student life. All of the work that the GRO does compares to that done by several full-time employees, yet the GRO relies on the work of sixteen full-time graduate students—much of which is fulfilled on a purely voluntary basis.

The GRO is now very central to the graduate experience at Johns Hopkins, providing social and advocacy functions, in contrast to the work done by previous incarnations of the GRO. GPSA week, graduate student orientation, TA training, undergraduate mentoring, Happy Hour, and Coffee Hour are just a few of the initiatives we have started in the past four years. Also, much of the work done by GRO Officers serves to mitigate many of the major conflicts that emerge between individual graduate students and faculty members. We believe that the GRO provides a great benefit the quality of life for graduate students at Hopkins, and to the Hopkins community at large, and we respectfully request that you continue to fund the GRO payroll at the full amount of our request.

Meetings	Requested Amount: \$4,500
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$3,000
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$4,488
Estimated expenses for full year	\$4,488

The GRO E-Board and General Council meets twice a month during the academic year. During these meetings we provide food (generally pizza) and non-alcoholic beverages, which provides great incentive for graduate student involvement. Most departments across the Homewood campus send at least one representative to participate in the work of the GRO.

The Council and E-Board do the important work of granting funds and offering other forms of support to campus groups, enabling individuals and groups to carry out a variety of social activities. Moreover, together we represent graduate students to help give our constituents a voice in terms of academic policies that directly affect them. In the past, we have worked together to get insurance for all graduate students on the Homewood campus.

Since the 2003-04 academic year, the GRO began inviting special guests to attend meetings, which serve as informational sessions about various campus services available to graduate students. In the past, Dr. Alain Joffe (Student Health and Wellness), Doug Fogel (Counseling Center), Deans Susan Boswell and Dorothy Sheppard (Student Affairs), Steve Ossmus (Security), Dr. Burger (Cue Report), Adrienne Alberts (Career Center), and Nick Arridell (International Student and Scholars Office) have attended our meetings. Through this forum we will continue to share information about graduate student needs and the services that are available on campus.

Our goal is to increase the representation of departments in regular attendance at GRO meetings through our on-going recruiting campaign, we anticipate slightly higher attendance at meetings in the next year. We have already been quite successful in recruiting new participants for the 2009-10 academic year, evidenced by the heightened attendance and participation during the past year and compared with 2007-08.

Office	Requested Amount: \$500
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$500
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$313
Estimated expenses for full year	\$323

Office expenses include printing services, phone bills, and IP addresses, beverages for council and Executive Board meetings, in addition to standard office supplies. In 2007 we purchased a new laser printer. This year we acquired a new (if used) mini-refrigerator and hope to receive a used computer from JHU's recycling of older models (we currently have only one, fully functioning computer).

NAGPS	Requested Amount: \$2,000
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$2,300
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$1,435
Estimated expenses for full year	\$1,435

During the 2008-09 academic year, the GRO sent one representative to the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students (NAGPS) national conference in St Paul. These meetings are a valuable opportunity for the GRO to coordinate with other graduate students on issues that affect graduate students on a national level, including taxation, international student visa concerns, child care, health insurance, etc. The budget would have been exhausted if two representatives had also traveled to the regional conference – in the future the GRO will make full efforts to send a representative to both the national and regional conferences.

We estimate that sending two people to the next NAGPS national conference which will cost approximately \$1500, and that sending two people to the regional conference will cost around \$900. The annual membership fee for NAGPS is \$500. Several graduate students typically attend a NAGPS Lobby Day in Washington, DC to lobby for graduate student issues (e.g., international student visas, tax exemption), and we hope to do so again next year. We estimate that travel expenses to Washington for the Lobby Day will be \$100. This gives a total estimate of \$3,000, which is far more than our request for support.

Promotional items	Requested Amount: \$1,000
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$2,600
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$2,851
Estimated expenses for full year	\$2,851

Every year, GRO gives out promotional items such as pens, glasses, coffee mugs, T-shirts and brochures. About twenty departments typically requested giveaways for their prospective graduate students. Many departments mention the many ways in which GRO's efforts improve the quality of student life to their incoming students, and refer them to the GRO website. Our promotional items help with the name recognition of our organization among graduate students, and each item has our web address on them. This is a good way for incoming graduate students

to learn more about GRO and its active role in student life. We are reducing the budget as we still have some promotional items left over and are reducing our order for the fall.

Mentoring	Requested Amount: \$200
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$200
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	0
Estimated expenses for full year	0

As aforementioned, have newly initiated a mentoring program in conjunction with the Career Center, offering undergraduate students the opportunity to learn more about the experience of graduate school and about the application process. At these events, it would be worthwhile to offer snacks and non-alcoholic beverages to our undergraduate and graduate participants. For this purpose, we are requesting funds in the amount of \$200.

Summer Sports League	Requested Amount: \$1,300
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$1,000
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$0
Estimated expense for full year	\$1,000

The Summer Sports League involves hundreds of graduate students in four different team sports—softball, soccer, volleyball, and basketball--and as such represents the GRO's single largest sustained events commitment during the summer months. For this summer, more than thirty teams are signed up to play. We would like to provide a suitable GRO-designed award (probably t-shirts) for the winning team in each of the four sports, as well as to hold a bbq for all summer sports participants.

Conference Travel Grants	Requested Amount: \$6,000
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$6,000
Expenses to date (July 2008-April 2009)	\$3,600
Estimated expenses for full year	\$6,000

In years past, the GRO has divided a \$22,000 budget for group funding and travel grants for individual graduate students, with \$6,000 allocated to the travel grant competition. During this year, the travel grant committee had the enormous challenge of sifting through an unprecedented number of high-quality applications in each of the three rounds of travel grant competition, with a very limited fund of grant money to award. The GRO allocated twice the amount budgeted (\$6,000 instead of \$3,000) in previous years, and will have no problem exhausting it in its third round (May). Travel to conferences for the purposes of presenting one's research is a key aspect of professional development for a graduate student in any discipline. As such – and anticipating a growing number of graduate students and a still-increased number of qualified applicants – the GRO is requesting \$6,000 for the upcoming academic year. Doing so will help fill the need – currently not being met by many Homewood academic departments – to fund travel to conferences and other forums for academic training and presentation of student work. These experiences are crucial for the professionalization of students, and in the long run, will help to

ensure that our graduate students will fare well on the job market – thus improving the overall reputation of graduate education at Johns Hopkins.

GPSA Week

Graduate-Professional Student Appreciation (GPSA) Week	Amount Requested: \$9,000
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$9,000
Expenses to date (July 2008-May 2009)	\$8,947
Estimated expenses for full year	\$8,947

GPSA Week was celebrated at JHU for the first time in 2000-2001. It is a nationwide event coordinated by the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS) and consists of a weeklong series of activities meant to increase awareness of graduate student issues, and show appreciation to the graduate and professional students for their role in education and research at universities throughout the country.

For the past five years, GPSA Week has been extremely well received by both students and faculty. Each year a number of prospective students visit campus during our celebration, and in response, many have remarked on their favorable impression of Hopkins. Several departments have suggested coordinating visits by their prospective graduate students to coincide with GPSA Week.

This year's GPSA Week was a huge success in that it increased the opportunities for graduate students to socialize amongst one another through fun and relaxing activities. The GRO coordinated several social events for grad students. The Hopkins celebration of GPSA Week featured extra promotional giveaways at our Mega Bonus Coffee Hour and Happy Hour, and a day of decadent desserts featuring sweets from Patisserie Poupon, and coffee from Carmas Café. Grad students also had the opportunity to have dinner at the Ambassador just north of campus. We held a special outdoor community service project at Stoney Run, followed by a happy hour for the volunteers.

One of the highlights of GPSA week was our annual Deans' Luncheon. We feel that this event was particularly productive in developing the Hopkins community, insofar as it enabled graduate students to voice their concerns directly to the Deans. During the luncheon, the Deans formed a panel—giving graduate students the opportunity to ask the Deans important questions about the way the University operates, from logistical matters to important administrative policies that affect graduate student life.

Graduate Student Orientation

Graduate Student Orientation	Amount Requested: \$7,500
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$7,500
Expenses to date (July 2008–May 2009)	\$7,521
Estimated expenses for full year	\$7,521

The process of building a graduate community begins anew each September with the start of the academic year. The extent to which we welcome new students into our community affects the extent to which new students wish to become invested in it.

Each year GRO runs several of the components of graduate student orientation: an Orientation BBQ, the Graduate Information Center (GIC), a letter to new students, and a Welcome Wagon program. The BBQ has been a successful event for the past several years, generally drawing about 500 graduate students, including both new and established students. Through the forum of the GIC, the GRO provides an opportunity for new graduate students to ask questions of returning graduate students about JHU and Baltimore. In addition, each year the GRO sends a letter to new graduate students advising them of useful websites, on ways to find housemates, paying the matriculation fee, and so forth. These important services that benefit incoming graduate students increase in cost with inflation, and thus this series of events tends to run slightly above budget. The budget increase requested reflects the creation of an Orientation Committee within the GRO as well as a new Executive Board member who aids in Orientation planning as well as housing issues for graduate students. For the first time ever, the GRO Orientation Committee will hold campus tours just for incoming graduate students, organize library tours, and coordinate small groups to take historic tours of Baltimore. Also, the Orientation Committee along with a small group of volunteers will introduce incoming grad students to the city of Baltimore by taking them out to see the Orioles, to enjoy a drink at Brewer's Art, to outings in Fells Point, and making runs to IKEA with them to help get them settled. A proper introduction to Baltimore will help change the misperception held by many newcomers to Baltimore that the city is an inhospitable one. The GRO feels that this will help encourage students, who may not otherwise venture much beyond campus, to explore and enjoy the city of Baltimore.

GRO Guide

<i>The GRO Guide to Living in Baltimore</i>	Amount Requested: \$6,500
Budgeted for 2008-2009	\$6,500
Expenses to date (July 2008–May 2009)	\$0
Estimated expenses for full year	\$0

The GRO Guide to Living in Baltimore is a biennial publication of the GRO, and one lauded by newcomers to Baltimore and Hopkins each year. It features chapters on moving to Baltimore, getting situated at each of the JHU campuses, finding good restaurants, and more. It is also available online at: www.jhu.edu/gro/GROGuide.

Each year until 2004-05, the GRO allocated \$6,000 per academic year for this publication, totaling the necessary \$12,000. This figure includes payroll, printing, and design. Note that as in years past, we will be selling advertising in the *GRO Guide*, and that the *Guide* is a biannual publication. Because we can anticipate that printing costs and payroll will be somewhat higher for the next edition of the GRO Guide than they were in the past, we request that our budget for the *GRO Guide* at least remain at the current \$6,500 to meet what we estimate will be the minimum cost of \$13,000. Last year the GRO held off on its biennial printing of the Guide, saving the organization and the university \$6,500.