

We've Got Issues: Understanding Graduate Student Needs on Campus and Beyond

Graduate students across the United States and Canada face a plethora of issues every year. From financial struggles to the daily grind of academia, from a lack of study space to discrimination, graduate students may often feel alone in their time as Classics students and may be unaware of resources offered at their universities. However, beyond the university-level, resources outside of grants and scholarships tend to be sparse. Why is this the case, even when committees at the regional level may be in existence to aid graduate students? To answer this question, it is crucial to engage with this student population directly in order to best serve and advocate on their behalf. The primary goal of this workshop is to conduct constructive discussions in an effort to define what are the most pressing issues for CAMWS graduate student members, both on their respective campuses and within the organization as a whole. By providing a safe and supportive environment for participants, this workshop will begin to assess the role of CAMWS and the Graduate Student Issues Committee in the lives of its student members and vice versa.

The presenter will begin by outlining the current understanding of graduate student issues in a series of successive scopes: campus-wide, organization-wide, and field-wide (Classics). This individual brings the perspective of a graduate student, who has experience advocating for students at the campus and regional organization levels. This presentation will cover current on-campus resources (at the presenter's university) and resources made available by CAMWS. During this talk, the presenter will utilize a "Think-Pair-Share" activity, in order to allow participants to reflect on their own situations, discuss them with an assigned partner, and then share them with the group, under the guidance of the presenter. These questions will be prepared

ahead of time so as not to discriminate against any participants; the participant will have the option to wait to share their feedback in the later anonymous submission to the open forum.

After the presentation, the presider will facilitate the “Share” of the Think-Pair-Share as an open forum to discuss issues directly or anonymously. The presider will utilize the questionnaire provided by the presenter to lead initial discussions between the participants and the presenter; during this time, the presenter will provide immediate feedback and suggestions for solutions to concerns at the campus-wide level. For organization-wide and field-wide concerns, the format of the workshop will shift to an open-ended format to allow for constructive discussion. To allow for anonymity, the presider will first conduct a short survey prior to the open forum, collect responses, and read them aloud one-by-one. The presenter will then record “minutes” of the ensuing discussion for future records, including any discussion on possible solutions, requests, or courses of action. The presider will conclude the workshop with an activity that will serve as the development of an individual action plan for participants, concerning all three scopes of graduate student issues and how they may begin to take positive steps in their own studies and lives.

For this workshop, the audience will be expected to actively participate in discussions or provide feedback anonymously. In particular, the sharing of experiences from individuals across the United States and Canada will be the most important aspect of this workshop. Many issues for graduate issues differ from campus to campus; however, when issues begin to recur for many students regardless of program or location, analysis and action may begin to take place at the organizational level. Therefore, honesty and constructive feedback will be required for all participants.