

## **Aye Committee Report**

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### **Why should you vote “yes” on Amendment 1?**

The Graduate Student Government (GSG) has consistently made good use of its operating budget by hosting social events (such as Wine and Cheese functions, the Valentine’s Day Dance, and the Frolic at Frist), sponsoring student organizations, and sending representatives to national graduate student conferences (such as the Ivy Summit). The GSG budget is funded by a \$5 per student fee; this fee was instituted in 1989 when the Graduate Student Union (the GSG’s predecessor) was established. (When the GSG was created to replace the GSU in 2000, the new constitution also called for a \$5 per student fee.) Since 1989, however, inflation has decreased the GSG’s purchasing power dramatically. The GSG has been aggressive about seeking alternate sources of funding; for example, the talk and book signing with Jorge Cham, author of PhD Comics, was co-sponsored with funds from more than five non-GSG sources. However, because our budget depends so heavily on co-sponsorship, the graduate student community is at the mercy of other organizations (in particular the graduate school administration) for funding, which may or may not be available for a given event. Furthermore, with our current operating budget, we are unable to sponsor all graduate student events for which funds are requested, and the GSG is not capable of significant support for large-scale events.

Increasing the GSG fee to \$10 would be a reasonably small and affordable raise, and the Princeton GSG fee would still be far lower than the fees charged by other Ivy League graduate student governments. The GSG could use its increased budget to invite more speakers on topics of interest to graduate students, such as graduate alumni or speakers on family issues. The GSG could also expand the number of social events it sponsors, including a Winter/New Year’s party for students who remain in Princeton over the holidays and more events co-sponsored with housing committees at places like Lawrence, Butler and the Graduate College. Finally, increasing the budget will enable the Princeton GSG to continue sending representatives to national graduate student government conferences and learn valuable information on other universities’ insurance benefits, housing, and academic policies.

### **Why should you vote Yes on Amendment 2?**

As outlined above, the current GSG fee has not been increased for 15 years, and failing to adjust for inflation has meant that every year the GSG is able to afford fewer and fewer services and events for graduate students. By fixing the annual GSG fee to a percentage of graduate student stipends (which are, in turn, annually adjusted for inflation), the student body will sustain the GSG budget at a manageable level, supporting both our student advocacy efforts and our student life projects. Any base fee will lose value over time, and fixing an annual fee increase to a percentage of the stipend will not cause any undue hardship to students from one year to the next. This will also prevent the need for frequent votes on whether to adjust the GSG budget without giving the GSG unreasonable power to increase its own fees.