

Eric Weese
GSC Election Statement
22 March 2006

I am honoured to be considered for the position of President. This year has been a busy and challenging one for the GSC, and I hope to have the opportunity to build upon our successes and to correct our failures. There are many issues that will need to be addressed in the coming year, but in this statement I will focus on just two: long-term coordination with the administration, and student involvement with the GSC.

On a day-to-day basis, the GSC and the administration communicate quite well. Officers and committee chairs meet regularly with relevant administrators, discuss priorities with them, and learn about upcoming policy decisions. Unfortunately, communication has not been as good with long-term strategic planning issues. A perfect example of this is NW35, the proposed new graduate dorm. Students were involved in an initial housing feasibility study in early 2004. We were then informed in February that a new building had been designed. During the intervening twenty-two months neither graduate students nor faculty had been consulted. This behaviour violated both common sense and formal recommendations. It would be naïve to suggest that we can eliminate this sort of situation, but I hope to develop, in cooperation with senior administrators, a way for graduate students to be meaningfully involved in Institute planning.

It is also important to improve communication within the GSC itself. Several months ago the council approved my proposal for online financial records, and I hope that in the coming year these records and others will be easily accessible to representatives. Students are more likely to become and remain representatives if they feel that they are being well informed and treated with respect. The fact that currently only 35 out of 86 representative positions are filled suggests that this is an area where improvement might be possible. We dissuaded some potential members by holding disorderly meetings, particularly when budget line items were up for discussion. An amendment to the Bylaws could establish a set procedure for approving the annual budget. This would reduce the procedural nonsense that characterised this year's budget meetings, and help ensure that the initial budget meeting actually results in a budget. Finally, I would increase both the regularity and quality of communication from the officers to the Executive Committee and the council as a whole.

I hope very much that I will have the opportunity to work on these and other issues over the coming year.