

## **Graduate Student Council (GSC) Overview and Action Plan (2025-2026)**

### **Understanding of the Graduate Student Council (GSC) and Its Functions**

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) serves as the primary representative body for graduate students, advocating for their academic, professional, and social needs. It facilitates communication between students and university administration, organizes events and initiatives that enhance the graduate student experience, and provides a platform for networking, leadership development, and community engagement. The GSC plays a vital role in ensuring that graduate students' voices are heard and their concerns addressed in institutional policies and decision-making processes.

### **Plan of Action If Elected as Vice President of Programming and Outreach**

As Vice President of Programming and Outreach, my primary focus will be to enhance professional development, foster social engagement, and expand community outreach to create a well-rounded graduate experience. My plan for the 2025-2026 academic year includes the following key initiatives:

#### **1. Enhancing Professional Development Opportunities**

- Organize skill-building workshops and speaker events featuring industry professionals, alumni, and academic leaders.
- Establish mentorship programs that connect graduate students with faculty, professionals, and peers for career guidance.
- Partner with career services to provide internship and job placement support tailored to graduate students.

#### **2. Strengthening Social Engagement and Networking**

- Plan diverse and inclusive social events, such as cultural festivals, networking mixers, and wellness activities to foster a strong sense of community.
- Introduce interdisciplinary collaboration events to encourage knowledge sharing across different fields of study.
- Develop a GSC digital engagement platform to keep students informed about events and opportunities in real-time.

### **3. Expanding Community Outreach and Service Initiatives**

- Identify and establish new community service opportunities, encouraging graduate students to contribute their skills to local organizations.
- Build partnerships with nonprofit organizations and local government agencies to create meaningful service-learning experiences.
- Develop outreach programs that connect graduate students with undergraduate mentoring, STEM education initiatives, and diversity and inclusion programs.

**Utilization of Assigned Duties and Available Resources** To ensure the success of these initiatives, I will leverage the following resources:

- Work closely with the GSC President and executive board to align programming with the council's mission.
- Utilize university funding and grants to support event planning and outreach efforts.
- Collaborate with academic departments, student organizations, and administrative offices to co-host events and share resources.
- Engage with graduate student representatives to gather feedback and continuously improve programming based on student needs.

**Commitment to the Success of the GSC** I am committed to making the Graduate Student Council a more impactful and supportive organization for all graduate students. My leadership experience, technical expertise, and passion for community engagement position me well to drive meaningful change. If elected, I will work tirelessly to enhance professional growth opportunities, foster a sense of belonging, and ensure that GSC programming continues to enrich the academic and social experiences of all graduate students.

I look forward to the opportunity to serve and make a lasting difference in our graduate student community.

**Nitish Thotakura**