

# Graduate Student Senate

General Assembly Meeting

June 10, 2020

<https://lehigh.zoom.us/j/91392754216>



[ingss@lehigh.edu](mailto:ingss@lehigh.edu)

# Agenda

- Remote Living and Learning Survey for Graduate Students - Results and Actions
- Announcements
- Discussion Space
- Open Floor



# Remote Living and Learning Survey for Graduate Students



- Almost 400 students replied; this is about a quarter of Lehigh's graduate students
- COB was the lowest response; they are mostly Masters' students, and part-time
- Some of the survey data might be a bit old now, because when the survey went out, all grad jobs were frozen
  - With Beth's advocacy, the provost decided to not freeze any graduate jobs

## Major Concerns:

- Grad student funding
- Fear of losing jobs outside of Lehigh
- Food insecurity or access to food (25% of grad students, which is about 100)
- Rent insecurity (39% of grad students, which is about 150)
- Grant funding (38% of grad students, which is about 150)
  - GLO is hearing that federal funding agencies have put forward extensions for grants
  - These extensions go through various points in the fall; this is a big concern for students who are funded by grants
- Ability to pay for health coverage (43%); international students are *required* to pay for Lehigh's health insurance
- Issues related to immigration or DACA status; international students are extremely concerned about this
  - Many of our international students, especially new ones, will not be

- able to get visas to get here in the fall
- Finding a job upon graduation - a lot of students are extremely worried about this
  - This is, of course, all feeding into stress and anxiety
- Worry about making progress on dissertation and thesis
- Access to lab and materials
  - STEM field are beginning to be able to go back to labs, with plans
  - LTS is actively working on opening up the libraries, and we should hear something in a week or two
- Worry about meeting faculty expectations
- Practicum and internship hours
- Ability to concentrate on assignments
- Balancing academic responsibilities with multiple roles
- Motivation
- Ability to complete degree
- Stress and mental health
- Access to medical providers - health center is now open for students who are around
  - Access to psychotherapy is less of a concern than access to medical doctors
- Discrimination - primarily for east Asian students, specifically if they leave campus and go into South Bethlehem
- Feeling safe at home - need more context to interpret this result

### **How can Lehigh support students?**

- Regular communication and transparency
- Information
- Checked on
- Consulted
- Recognized; acknowledge the grad experience is different
- Connection
- Access to resources
- Flexibility; adjust expectations

### **Bright Spots:**

- A lot of students reported feeling very supported by their department and/or by Lehigh (more from department than from Lehigh)
- The bulk of students are planning on completing studies at Lehigh
- Expressions of appreciation

## Budget Committee

- Meets once a year (in the summer) to determine the GSS operating budget as well as the budgets for all graduate clubs
- We're still looking for a delegate from the college of engineering and applied sciences

Sine Zungu (treasurer):

- Before we can start allocating funds, we need to create a budget committee.
  - This funding is for travel grants, general grad activities, and clubs
- The committee will include Sine, and one representative from each college.
  - It is a short committee; it usually meets once a year to allocate the funds
  - If there are any other situations that require the budget committee to make a decision, they usually meet via email
- If you are interested in signing up, please send an email to [ingss@lehigh.edu](mailto:ingss@lehigh.edu), or to Sine.

Please consider signing up!

## Optional Practical Training Program Letter

- OPT allows international students to work in the US post-graduation for a set period of time. STEM graduates get 3 years and non-stem can work for 1 year.
- Administration seeking to suspend the program
- CMU and MIT graduate students wrote a letter and are seeking graduate student governments' signatures from a variety of Universities
- Unit Reps will vote on if we sign this letter - look for an email

This will be a quick turnaround; simple majority for if we will add our signature.

[ingss@lehigh.edu](mailto:ingss@lehigh.edu)

# Information Pages for Graduate Students

Graduate Life Office Homepage:

<https://gradlife.web.lehigh.edu/>

Graduate Student COVID-19 Information Page:

<https://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/organization/graduate>

[ingss@lehigh.edu](mailto:ingss@lehigh.edu)

## Mental Health Resources

Counseling Center access is still available via Zoom or phone

After hours counselor always available.

Dial **(610)758-3880**, select “**0**” on the keypad

Referrals- we are working on a list to share with everyone!

Keep up to date:

<https://studentaffairs.lehigh.edu/content/covid-19-counseling-psychological-services-updates>



# Mental Health - Self-Care



<https://tinyurl.com/LehighSelfCare>

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1pdoAf-MkxeOB8pAM4qGge4TagEryIDXJzjiaoDCM7pY/edit?usp=sharing>

- Natania and Sara have put together this self care guide

# Online Support and Connection

Feeling overwhelmed?  
Wanting to connect?

JOIN A UCPS VIRTUAL GROUP WORKSHOP

## Live Better, Stress Less

Counselor facilitated groups focused on distress management with opportunities to talk about, share coping efforts, and gain support around how students are being affected and adjusting to COVID-19 and related stress

**HOW TO GET CONNECTED:**

Call UCPS (610-758-3880) or email [incso@lehigh.edu](mailto:incso@lehigh.edu) for workshop times and to be provided with the Zoom link!

### Anything Mentionable is Manageable!

Super informal,  
counseling psych peer led,  
de-stress group.

Fridays  
12-1pm

We, Sara Beachy and Natania Lipp, are two students in the counseling psychology program. We wanted to facilitate a peer led support group for graduate students that focuses on exchanging ideas about coping skills, brainstorming activities that may reduce stress and anxiety, and talking about how to maintain community during this time. These groups will be super informal, just a way to check in with each other and share this experience!

Sign up here: <https://forms.gle/c3jma9a7U1L4H1W2A>  
Where: On zoom, we will send you a link!

Sign up for more information.

With Sara Beachy and Natania Lipp

## SUMMER IN THE PRIDE CENTER

You, our community mean everything to us. Here are some ways we can connect this summer.

- Wednesday's at 12noon (edt)  
Join Chelsea Scott & Keri for lunch in the Virtual Lounge  
[lehigh.edu/virtualpridecenterlounge](http://lehigh.edu/virtualpridecenterlounge)
- Meet 1 on 1 with a PC staff member  
Sign up at [pridecenter.psu.com/bookline](http://pridecenter.psu.com/bookline)
- Virtual Lounge Open 24/7  
[lehigh.edu/virtualpridecenterlounge](http://lehigh.edu/virtualpridecenterlounge)
- Virtual Student Support Spaces/  
TGNC & RPFO  
Tuition, Trans, and Gender Non-Conforming  
Tuesday at 4pm EST  
email: [kaj@lehigh.edu](mailto:kaj@lehigh.edu) or [hoever@lehigh.edu](mailto:hoever@lehigh.edu)  
Tues at 10pm EST  
email: [psu@lehigh.edu](mailto:psu@lehigh.edu)  
Monday at 4pm EST  
email: [kawon@lehigh.edu](mailto:kawon@lehigh.edu) for more info.

Questions, please email: [pridecenter@lehigh.edu](mailto:pridecenter@lehigh.edu)

## HOME AWAY

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT SPACE



"HOME AWAY" IS A ZOOM SPACE FOR SUPPORT AROUND THE FEELINGS, EXPERIENCES, AND WORRIES OF SHELTERING FAR FROM HOME DURING COVID-19. THE DISCUSSION SPACE IS FACILITATED BY PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS AT LEHIGH AND THE HOPE IS TO PROVIDE COMMUNITY, CONNECTION, AND EXPLORATION OF WAYS TO COPE WITH THIS. CONTACT THE COUNSELING CENTER FOR ZOOM LINK.

MONDAYS 3:30 PM

P: (610) 758-3880



## Virtual Pride Center Lounge

Zooming 24/7

Staffed  
M-F  
2pm to 4pm  
EST

Feel free to stop by anytime and  
connect as community

All of these resources are in the GLO newsletter

# Access the Career Center Virtually



**Summer Career Coaching Appointments Available**

Meet with your career coach, Ali Erk via Zoom or phone for in depth career support

Three Types:  
Explore (30 minutes)  
Advanced Career Prep (30 minutes)  
Mock Interview (60 minutes)

 **Sign up on Handshake!**  
[lehigh.joinhandshake.com](https://lehigh.joinhandshake.com)



**The Hire-a-Grad Summer Initiative is underway!**

- Keep checking on handshake for campus jobs just for grads. [lehigh.joinhandshake.com](https://lehigh.joinhandshake.com)
- More jobs will be added over the next couple of weeks.
- Positions are available in all the colleges, minimum \$15/hr.
- All positions are projects that can be done remotely.

Brought to you by the Provost Office, CAS, OIA and GLO

## More Info:

<https://careercenter.lehigh.edu/content/working-virtually-career-center>

Aly Erk (Career Center):

- There are resources on Handshake, including COVID-19 remote opportunities

# BLACK/BIPOC/QTPOC LUSSI/FIRST-GEN

Student + Alumni

## Town Hall Meeting

*Friday June 12*

**8:00 pm EST**

Share testimonies:

- Why Black, BIPOC, QTPOC student & alumni experiences motivate demands to Lehigh
- Influence of the LUSI Program



**zoom** 319-190-9702

Will send out BALANCE letter when we send out the minutes for this meeting.

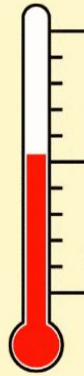
**GRADS HAVE WALKED 532 MILES SO FAR!**

# 1,000 MILES

## IN OUR GRAD STUDENTS' SHOES

We invite our graduate students to walk/run a collective 1,000 miles

**How does it work?**  
Upload the miles you run/walk each day to record our progress!



### Prizes awarded for

*Most miles walked*

*Most creative route*

*Best post-walk photo*

**GLO** is making  
a historical record  
for grads during  
COVID-19



*Share with us what you  
are thinking and feeling*

Look for posts on Facebook

[facebook.com/groups/lehighglo/](https://facebook.com/groups/lehighglo/)  
from Kadia



email  
[gradshare@lehigh.edu](mailto:gradshare@lehigh.edu)



WRITING

★★★★  
**BOOT  
CAMP**  
★★★★

**Friday(s)**  
**June 12 and 26**  
**8:45am-**  
**12:15pm**

A 1/2 Day Virtual Writing Retreat

8:45: Zoom opens, intentions, inspirational message

9:00: Session begins, writing starts

10:30: check-in by chat. encourage stretch/walk break

12:00: Session ends, writing ends. Quick check-out

Sign up and registration required for link!

**NO DISTRACTIONS.**  
**NO INTERRUPTIONS.**  
**NO EXCUSES.**

WHAT'S  
BREWING:  
SUMMER 2020

MERITS

LIMITS

# CAPITALISM: LIMITS AND MERITS

Join us for informal, interdisciplinary discussion

THURSDAY, JUNE 11 @ 6 PM

[HTTPS://LEHIGH.ZOOM.US/J/98514892042](https://lehigh.zoom.us/j/98514892042)





FEELING ISOLATED?

## Lehigh Lookout

### Learning To Connect

This 60-minute social interaction space will focus on building deeper and more meaningful connections—with yourself and with others. If you're open to exploring your relationships to self and others, this will be an opportunity to experiment with vulnerability in a compassionate environment. When you make space for curiosity, you may be surprised by the outcome.

Wednesdays at 3:30pm EDT. [Click here to sign up.](#)



(610) 758-3880    incso@lehigh.edu    @lehigh\_UCPS



## COFFEE BREAK

This 60-minute space is for anyone interested in taking a break, getting together, saying hello, updating each other on your current circumstances, talking about how you are negotiating life at this time and what you are doing to make it all work. Grab your mug and come fill your cup!

Thursdays at 3:30pm EDT. [Click here](#) to sign up.

(610) 758-3880    incso@lehigh.edu    @lehigh\_UCPS



## Live Better with Stress

This 60-minute workshop focuses on distress management with opportunities to talk about challenges, share coping efforts, and gain support in adjusting to COVID-19 and related stressors.

Tuesdays at 1:30pm EDT. [Click here](#) to sign up.

(610) 758-3880    incso@lehigh.edu    @lehigh\_UCPS

## Discussion Space



Start by thanking everyone who filled out the fall concerns survey - we shared them all with the Academic Planning Taskforce, they really seemed to listen. The biggest takeaway from the meeting is that they understand how variable grad situations can be, and are aiming to include flexibility and autonomy in their plan. Further thank DI&E committee who are already taking steps to act on the action steps discussed in last week's town hall and President Simon's response to the open letter.

*Has there been any outreach to incoming graduate students?*

- This is the next big push, in the next week or two
- GLO is about two weeks behind
- Specific questions can get in touch with Kathleen
- We are playing orientation by ear, since we want to base this off of what the situation in PA looks like
  - Will likely be mostly online

*Update from DI&E:*

- Working diligently on action steps put out in the letter
- How can we, as graduate students, help to facilitate action and change and hold Lehigh accountable?
- As a group of students, where are we coming from?

*Thoughts about moving forward with anti-racism at Lehigh:*

- Possible townhall for graduate students?
- Groupmes: Organizing for LU Black Lives and Lehigh Students for BLM - most

- of organizing effort
- Anonymous survey to students to gather thoughts about BLM

*Problematic legislation happening:*

- Escalation of tensions between the White House and China → reducing the number of student visas for Chinese students in STEM fields
- OPT - trying to organize graduate schools so that when things come up, we can respond collectively

For GSS Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Committee, if anyone has something specific to say regarding BLM and Lehigh as an anti-racist institution, please email me at [kam716@lehigh.edu](mailto:kam716@lehigh.edu).

[ingss@lehigh.edu](mailto:ingss@lehigh.edu)

## Suggestion/Concern Form

Send the E-Board feedback

What issues are you facing as a grad?

Submissions can be anonymous

<https://bitly.com/GSSsuggest>

<https://forms.gle/H45JrxGbjXb45qdh7>



<https://forms.gle/H45JrxGbjXb45qdh7>

# Open Floor



Hi all, I'm involved in organizing a Peace March in Emmaus this Sunday at 2pm from Furnace Dam Park in Emmaus to the Emmaus Triangle. We will have a few community speakers at the end of the walk at the Triangle. We'll also have voter registration tables. If you can come, please wear masks and social distance as possible. Here is our Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/180742033343695/?fref=nf>

The background of the entire page is a detailed, colorful stained glass dome, likely from a Gothic cathedral. The dome features intricate geometric patterns, including stars and floral motifs, in shades of red, blue, yellow, and white. The central oculus is visible at the top.

**Next Meeting:**  
**July 15th, 12:10-1pm**

<https://lehigh.zoom.us/j/91392754216>

A set of three overlapping social media icons: a blue Facebook 'f' logo, a blue and white Twitter bird logo, and a blue and white Instagram camera logo.

@LehighGSSJ

[ingss@lehigh.edu](mailto:ingss@lehigh.edu)