

GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION – RECAPS & UPDATES

Dear Graduate Student Community,

GSO is committed to serving the graduate and professional student body at Marquette University. Please review the recaps and updates below to stay informed on the latest initiatives and programming. GSO encourages all graduate and professional students to get involved.

Thank you!

GSO E-Board

- Meet your [GSO E-Board leaders](#)
- Meet your [GSO academic representative or university committee representative](#)
- Reach out to the GSO via [Graduate Student Anonymous Communication Form](#)

EVENT RECAPS & UPDATES

Welcome Back Social (Trivia) Friday

GSO was thrilled to host the annual Welcome Back Social on Friday, September 5, 2025, from 5:00–6:30 PM at the 707 Hub. The evening was filled with fun, games, and trivia, setting a positive tone for the semester ahead. The event was a great success, with over 100 students attending throughout the night.

Students had the chance to:

- Meet and welcome new graduate students
- Reconnect with peers across disciplines
- Build their networks and exchange ideas
- Enjoy a relaxed and lively atmosphere with plenty of games and activities

The GSO was delighted to see such strong participation and enthusiasm and looks forward to hosting another social in spring 2026.

Self-Defense Class

GSO partnered with the Marquette University Police Department (MUPD) to offer a free self-defense training class on Tuesday, September 23, from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the Wellness + Helfaer Recreation Center, Room 326. The event welcomed all who wished to attend and learn new skills. During the session, participants engaged in a hands-on approach to mastering effective defense techniques while also learning about the latest national and local crime trends. The class fostered a sense of empowerment and community, as attendees practiced practical safety strategies under the guidance of MUPD officers. No registration had been required, making it easy for students and community members alike to take part in this valuable and educational experience.

GSO All-Council Meeting

On Thursday, September 25, from 12 to 1 p.m., GSO convened its Council Meeting with executive leaders, academic representatives, and university committee representatives in attendance. The meeting focused on clarifying roles and responsibilities to better serve the graduate student community.

Representatives were reminded of their key duties, including promoting GSO communications, events, and opportunities, and providing updates from their academic units or university committees. Additionally, all academic representatives are expected to host one internal Town Hall each in the fall and spring semesters.

The GSO extended thanks to representatives who have already hosted their Town Halls and encouraged students to reach out to their [academic representatives](#) to learn when upcoming sessions will be held in their departments.

Game Night: Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball, and Ping Pong

On Friday, October 10, the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) hosted a successful Game Night at the Wellness + Helfaer Recreation Center, drawing a crowd of 35 to 40 graduate and professional students from across campus. The two-hour event offered students a chance to take a break from their academic routines and connect through a variety of games, including volleyball, ping pong, basketball, and soccer.

The GSO looks forward to continuing to offer fun opportunities for connection and engagement and hopes every graduate student takes time to attend at least one event throughout the year.

Bucks v Knicks Game at Fiserv Forum

The GSO coordinated an exciting outing to the Fiserv Forum on Tuesday, October 28, for graduate students to attend and watch the Milwaukee Bucks take on the New York Knicks. A total of 108 attendees filled sections 206 and 207, coming together for a night of basketball, school spirit, and community. The first 75 students who purchased tickets enjoyed an extra highlight of the evening—stepping onto the court after the game for a large group photo.

Stay tuned for another Bucks game opportunity in spring 2026.

Town Hall #1 - Recap

On Thursday, October 2, the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) hosted its first Town Hall of the semester from 12 to 1 PM via MS Teams. The event provided graduate students with an opportunity to engage in open dialogue about challenges, opportunities, updates, and events affecting their community.

The Town Hall welcomed the following guest speakers:

Dr. Scott D'Urso, Acting Dean of the Graduate School, who offered a warm welcome and brief remarks at the start of the meeting.

Mr. Juan Carlos Ampie, Director of Student Media, encouraged graduate students to explore the [Marquette Wire](#), which includes TV, radio, newspaper, and magazine content creation. He highlighted ways students could get involved and share their perspectives through these media channels.

Dr. Alyson Gerdes and Dr. Nakia Gordo presented the Whole Person Wellness Program that is open to all graduate students in spring 2026. The program is a study that offers multiple approaches to improving your overall health. The presenters described how students could participate in the study and benefit from its comprehensive wellness strategies.

Dr. Jodi Blahnik shared insights from the 2025 Marquette University Climate Study Survey. She encouraged graduate students to take part in listening and feedback sessions or submit their thoughts via the [Campus Climate Survey Feedback Form](#). The survey collects information about students' perceptions of the university's culture and its impact on the well-being of students, faculty, and staff.

The Town Hall also gave the GSO an opportunity to respond to student concerns submitted through the [Graduate Student Anonymous Communication Form](#). One recurring topic was health insurance for both international and domestic graduate students.

International Student Health Insurance Plan: An international graduate student sought clarity on health, vision and dental coverage. The GSO reached out to the Office of International Education (OIE) for plan clarification. According to the plan, vision and dental insurance can be purchased through the My Account Portal, with costs varying by individual circumstances. Routine eye exams for adults are covered once every 12 months, though glasses and contacts are not included, and dental coverage

applies only in cases of injury. Students adding minor children to their plans receive partial dental coverage and full coverage for eye exams with a small copay.

Domestic Student Health Insurance: Another health insurance-related concern was the absence of a university-offered graduate student health insurance plan. Students with assistantships issued through the Graduate School (excludes non-Marquette issued assistantships via grants, fellowships, scholarships, etc.) are provided a supplemental stipend of \$400 in the fall and \$400 in the spring, which can be used at the student's discretion, including for health insurance.

Students seeking a health insurance plan are encouraged to contact [Todd Catlin](#) at [Transitional Health Benefits](#), which offers free consultations to explore plans as well as sign-up assistance. Transitional Health Benefits will help students explore a variety of insurance options, including ACA/Marketplace plans, dental coverage, international travel insurance, and more. The GSO has reached out to university leadership to learn more about the topic of student health insurance which may include the possibility of conducting a new graduate student health insurance survey.

Writing Groups: Graduate students also expressed interest in writing groups to foster community and support academic work. The GSO sent out a survey to the graduate student body to gauge interest and best days and time to schedule the groups. The survey received 65 responses in favor of offering writing groups. Per survey responses, the GSO partnered with the Graduate School and Raynor Library to offer the writing groups every Monday from 9am-Noon and Tuesday from Noon-4:30pm; beginning on Monday, November 10 and Tuesday, November 11, 2025 in Raynor 134.

Copy Editing Services: Finally, the topic of professional copy editing services was raised. While the Ott Writing Center currently provides writing support, it does not offer copy editing. The GSO is continuing discussions with the Graduate School to explore potential future support for students preparing theses, dissertations, and professional publications.

Be sure to attend the next Town Hall meeting on Thursday, November 13 from 12 – 1 pm via [MS Teams](#). Town Halls are intentionally held online to allow for flexibility and to be inclusive of our online graduate student community.

EVENTS to COME

GSO Town Hall #2

The GSO will host their second Town Hall of the fall 2025 term on Thursday, November 13 from 12 – 1 pm via [MS Teams](#). The GSO encourages all graduate and professional students to attend. The Town Hall will provide updates on current topics of inquiry, reports from academic and university representatives, share about events, and open dialogues, discussions, and feedback from the student body.

Coffee and Donuts, Monday, Dec 08, 8.30 - 10 am, Raynor Library

GSO is hosting FREE, coffee and donuts for graduate students on to kick-off the beginning of finals week! The event will be in the entrance of the Raynor Library from 8:30 am to 10 am.