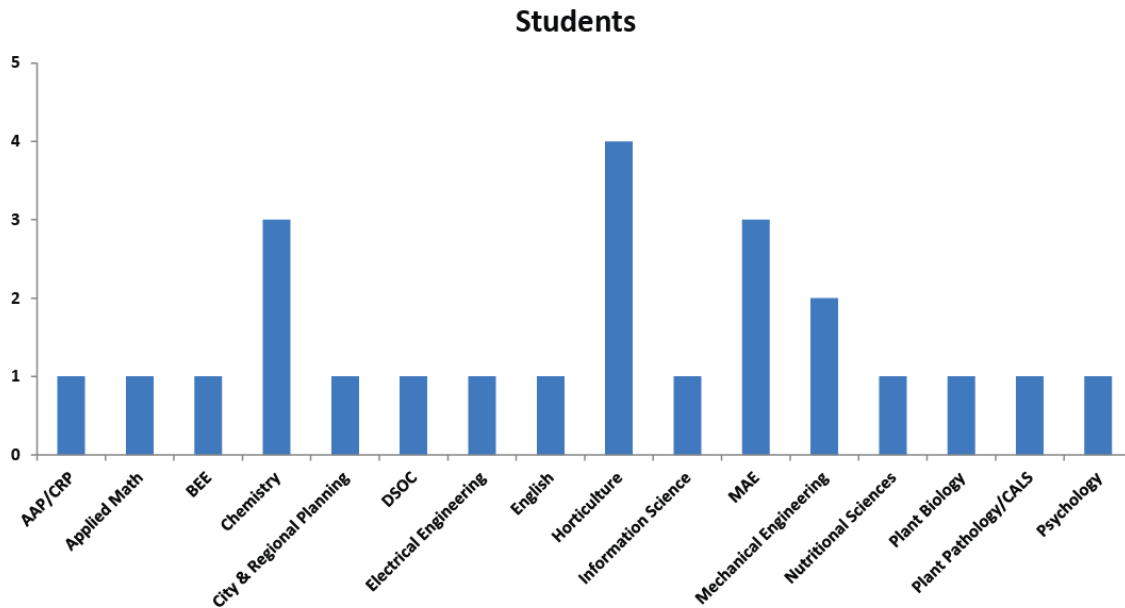


**Report Town Hall**  
**November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

Organized by the Student Advocacy Committee,  
A part of Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Attendance: 24 students (Breakdown by department below), 4 administrators/faculty



Covered three main topic areas chosen based on GPSA and general student survey:

**Career Services, Sense of Community, Mental Health & Well-being**

Key note introductions were provided for each topic [career services: Anne Poduska, International and Graduate Career Adviser; sense of community: Kris Corda, Director of Big Red Barn & Janna Lamey, Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Life; Cornell University, mental health & well-being: Yevgeniy Izrayelit, Chair of GPSA Student Advocacy Committee]

Discussion occurred in 4 groups over a catered dinner with ~15 minutes/topic.

Annotation below (#/4) = (how many groups agreed on each theme)

**Career services** key responses for desired resources/methods of support:

- Workshops on general job skills (4/4)
- Help identify marketable skills and identify jobs for those skills (4/4)
- Increase networking with non-academic professionals (3/4)
- Improve CCNet (3/4)
- In person Career Fair (2/4)
- Increase alumni networking (2/4)

**Sense of Community** ways to improve “sense of community”:

- Mixers with specific activities to encourage interaction (4/4)
- Recurring cross-disciplinary activities (4/4)
- Workshops to improve mentor-student relationship (2/4)
- Annual school wide retreat for activities/clubs (2/4)

**Mental Health & Well-being** best ways to support and improve mental health/well-being

- Exercise based activities (4/4)
- Time management workshops (3/4)
- Support mentor-student relationships (2/4)
- Encourage department based support for mental health/well-being (2/4)
- Improve events calendar (2/4)

**Summary/Recommendations:** The town hall fostered discussion about three issues very relevant to graduate and professional students. Various themes emerged from all groups that highlight specific ways to improve the Cornell experience. Notably, both “sense of community” and “mental health & well-being” focused on encouraging more creative student focused activities.

The student advocacy committee recommends that GPSA Programming Board and the Graduate School support more **cross-disciplinary exercise-based mixers**, which represent a specific way in which both mental health/well-being and sense of community can be improved.

The student advocacy committee also recommends that career services and the graduate school continue to **provide support for workshops that focus on time management, and other job related skills** to address themes that emerged from “career services” and “mental health/well-being”.

We hope other themes that our outlined above also serve as a guideline for future actions and programming.

This report will be forwarded to the Graduate Community Initiative Committee; the GPSA executive team; Anne Poduska, International and Graduate Career Adviser; Janna Lamey, Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Life; Kris Corda, Director of Big Red Barn; Catherine Thrasher-Carroll, Mental Health Promotion Coordinator; Jan Talbot, Health Educator.

We thank all participants and organizers for their contributions.

Submitted by the GPSA Student Advocacy Committee (2012/2013)