Academics and Professional Development Committee Meeting
October 9, 2012

1. Common Grounds: Joori Park discussed possible ways to improve the distribution of vouchers. The committee decided to retain the old system, where participants write to the treasurer and collect their vouchers at HGS, but to add an expiration date to the vouchers which would give participating students a uniform window of time within which to claim and use them, starting from the date of request. Vouchers would be limited to one request per semester. The expiration date would simplify the treasurer’s accounting, since the value of unused vouchers could now be returned to the total remaining Common Grounds funds at regular intervals, and the number of vouchers printed during each period can now accurately reflect the remaining funds.

2. Grants database: Dean Ladouceur is joining the configuration team which will create the new grants database’s interface. GSA representatives should decide what they want the interface to look like. Ksenia Sidorenko collected feature requests and screenshots of existing problems with the databases.

3. Florian Fuchs observed that many grants are not included in the GSAS database and asked how the grants data is gathered. Do different universities have access to different lists of grants?

   a. He also suggested a feature for the new database: an interface inspired by airfare search sites like kayak.com, where users can receive e-mail updates of results to their personalized search criteria as new grants appear or the results otherwise change. The new database should also have more flexible search options, filters for results, and ways of ordering the results.

4. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 6th at 3:00. The APD will meet with the deans to discuss the Teaching Fellows program. We will discuss the issue of 6th-year teaching. The deans have said that they will try to provide us with data regarding availability of 6th-year teaching. Other issues to be discussed include language teaching and the Associates in Teaching Program.

5. Jin Su Joo reported that the Minority Advisory Committee is focusing on the professional schools this year, and will be compiling reports on the various professional schools, which it will deliver to the president. The APD committee discussed Yale’s generally poor ratings for diversity among peer institutions and considered the possibility that the university’s focus on undergraduate education might contribute to low diversity among graduate
students, who get little of the personalized attention reserved for undergraduates.