

Criminal Justice Graduate Students, Faculty, and Staff,

With the semester coming to a conclusion, I thought I would take a moment to reflect back on all that the things the Criminal Justice Graduate Student Organization (CJ GSO) has accomplished so far this year. From the beginning it was clear that this administration was going to do things differently. In the first three meetings, members voted on 21 Constitutional Amendments. While most Amendments were typographical in nature, there were several substantive changes made to the organization relating to voting rights, the mission statement, and organizational structure. Relating voting rights, we streamlined the process for identifying committee chairs, provided external oversight to elections, and changed the quorum requirements to better reflect meeting attendance. Our mission statement was also expanded to include service and networking objectives. Finally, we added committees (i.e., the Service Committee, Teaching Excellency Committee, and Committee on Organizational Standing) to support these endeavors.

Beyond these formal changes, the officers also sought to establish a foundation for future administrations to be built upon. For the first time since 2007, the organization sought recognition by the University. We are pleased to announce that on August 28, 2013 our application for formalized organizational

standing was accepted. This allowed us to claim not-for-profit standing and establish a bank account without minimum holdings or annual fees. With this asset we have sought to achieve financial independence in pursuit of our mission. To this end, we held our first fundraiser during the summer titled *CJ GSO Officers' Summer Grill Out*. During this potluck event we also took orders for CJ GSO t-shirts. This event permitted us to purchase the CJ GSO t-shirts outright and although we have yet to sell all of the shirts, these assets will continue to provide for the organization in years to come.

---

CJ GSO Fall 2013 Quick Facts

Amendments to the Constitution .....	21
General Meetings .....	8
Events Sponsored .....	5
Graduate Organization Collaborations ....	2
Money in the Bank .....	\$246.70

---

In addition to the officer's activities, several committees sponsored events on behalf of CJ GSO. The Social Committee held three events: a tailgate at the SHSU vs. SFA football game at Reliant Stadium and two late night pizza parties during midterm and final weeks (titled *Exam Jam*). In addition to identifying local opportunities for aid, the Service Committee sponsored two events. The first was a benefit for Jail Guitar Doors, a not-for-profit organization that provides musical instruments to incarcerated individuals as part of their rehabilitation. Upon receiving our \$110 donation, Jail Guitar Doors directed the funds to Walls Unit here in Huntsville. The second service opportunity was with the Clothesline Project. The Clothesline Project is a weeklong event aimed at drawing attention to domestic violence. As part of the event, t-shirts, representing every fatality of domestic violence in Texas in 2012, are displayed. We, as an organization, helped decorate the seven of the over 100 t-shirts.

The Networking Committee sponsored three events. The first event was a blitz event to welcome and help new students move into their new homes here in Texas. The second event brought together returning and incoming students in a social setting (bowling and dinner) during orientation festivities. The third event was also social in nature and was titled

---

CJ GSO Scheduled Events for the Spring 2014

General Meeting .....	Jan. 15 at 3:30 in Bates
GSPO/ CJ GSO Collaborative Event .....	Jan. 24 at TBA
Body Farm Tour .....	Jan. 29 at TBA
Dr. Oliver Brown-Bag .....	Feb. 5 at 3:30 in Bates
Dr. Boisvert Brown-Bag .....	Feb. 12 at 3:30 in Bates
General Meeting .....	Feb. 26 at 3:30 in Bates
Exam Jam 3 .....	Mar. 5 at TBA
General Meeting .....	Mar. 19 at 3:30 in Bates
General Meeting .....	Apr. 23 at 3:30 in Friel (Elections)
Exam Jam 4 .....	Apr. 30 at TBA
General Meeting .....	May 14 at 3:30 in Courtroom

---

*Friendsgiving.* This event was a potluck for graduate students who could not go home during the Thanksgiving holiday. The networking committee also took the lead in creating a resource handbook for new students that was distributed during orientation.

The Research and Theory Development Committee put together two Brown-Bags this semester. Dr. William King gave the first titled *Funding your dreams: Career advancement through funded research* and Dr. Brian Boutwell gave the second titled *What if everything you knew about crime was wrong? A complication of biosocial research in criminal justice & criminology.* The Teaching Excellency Committee also offered a Brown-Bag by Dr. Phillip Lyons titled *ACEing your course: Building in academic community engagement.* Finally, CJ GSO has sought to collaborate with other graduate student organizations on campus, including the Graduate Student Psychology Organization (GSPO) and the Society of Forensic Sciences (SFS). These cross-discipline ties provide mutual benefits to our organizations' success.

Each of these events speaks to the organizations' vitality and is a testament to it's' members who seek criminal justice and criminology knowledge, skills, and abilities that may lie beyond the classroom. A special thanks needs to given to Drs. Boisvert, Nobles, and G. Armstrong for their continued support of our organization. Also, I would like to recognize my co-officers (Mai Naito, Cassidy DeHaan, and Erin Castro) and committee chairs (Bradly Campbell, Melissa Petkovsek, Rick Lewis, Jessica Wells, Andrew Colarusso and Layne Dittman) for their tireless work. Although we have accomplished a lot this past semester, CJ GSO has no intention of slowing down. Next semester we have scheduled five general meetings, two Brown Bags, and four additional events that are sure to excite our constituency. I hope you'll join us!

Sincerely,

Seth Fallik, M.S.

*CJ GSO President  
Graduate Research Assistant  
Doctoral Teaching Fellow*