

Informal Information on Meeting with Dean Dunne regarding the Petition to Rename the Graduate Programs School Name

Date: October 20th, 2005

Attendance: Dean Dunne
Christina Kiel (GPIA Student Government)
Denis Fitzgerald (GPIA Student Government)
Alex Bell (GPIA Student Government)

Further questions or comments? Contact the student government!

Hello fellow students,

We met with Dean Dunne on Thursday and she is very open to our complaints and agrees that having the graduate programs under the heading of “General Studies” is inappropriate. In fact, she has initiated some measures of damage control that have been approved by Provost and President.

The good news first:

- “General Studies” will **NOT** appear on our diploma.
- Letter heads from our program and other graduate programs will say “The New School” only.
- Catalogues, brochures, ads etc. are not to say “General Studies” – if you come across any that do (there have been some glitches), please let us know and we will pass it on to the Dean’s office.

Still in the works:

- The transcripts still say “General Studies”, that’s a computer issue the administration is working on
- Further isolation of the graduate programs from “General Studies”, like having a direct link from the New School home page to GPIA. The whole website issue is still a bit messy – you know what a disaster The New School’s website is...

While these measures are steps in the right direction, they don’t solve the main problem that we are officially going to a school for general studies. To do anything possible to hide the connection can only be an interim solution – we want to be proud of the school we are attending! Whether the name “General Studies” will be eliminated is uncertain, and in any case it will not happen any time soon. Dean Dunne mentioned that she favors a name change and went so far as to say that she would be in favor of calling the New School for General Studies the New School Founding Division. That was just her idea and not anything she has actively pursued.

So far, nobody we talked to dared to take responsibility and nobody answered the question: Who on earth signed up on this name?? And without even consulting students and faculty!? This is important, because it could be indicative of a larger problem at the university. Big decisions that affect everyone at the university must be made transparently.

Alternatives:

- The New School will not create new divisions, so we will not get our own school.
- The New School and The New School for Social Research (as well as Milano) are already working closely together and further cooperation on projects is in the works. So at some point it may become advantageous to restructure the divisions, which would give GPIA an in into the NSSR. Maybe. This is a very vague and very far away future perspective.

The second issue we discussed with the Dean was the use of “GPIA”. You may have heard that the school would prefer us to say International Affairs at The New School instead. “GPIA” has never been officially used, but simply developed in the program itself and has become our brand name. To keep it more general (ha!) with “International Affairs” has been a conscious decision by the Provost, so it would be easier in the future to expand the program, to add a B.A. for example, or a certificate. We insisted that we want to institutionalize “GPIA”, because it has become a brand name and because, especially in light of the “General Studies”, we have to make clear somewhere that we are a serious graduate program.

We will meet with Vice-President Reimer in a few weeks and follow up on the issues with her. Dean Dunne will stay in contact with us and discuss the use of “GPIA” with the Provost.

The GPIA Student Government will continue to pursue the effort to change the name of our school to something more suitable. We will let the school leadership know that important decisions that affect us in such fundamental ways cannot be taken without consulting students and faculty. Hopefully we will have more feedback from the administration soon.