





# *10th Anniversary Report*

Graduate Student Center  
2001 - 2011

GRAD  
CENTER  
PENN





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# Letter from the Director

When Penn's Graduate Student Center was first imagined by a group of graduate student leaders, they stated "For Penn to reach the highest level of achievement for its graduate students, the University needs to nurture and foster both rigorous depth in disciplinary education and a multi-faceted social environment that facilitates cross-disciplinary exchange." Over the past ten years we have worked hard to achieve this vision. What started as two rooms with rented furniture has become a vibrant student center and the gathering place for all graduate students on campus. Today the Graduate Student Center at Penn is widely regarded as a model for other institutions as they seek to expand their grad student services.

We are very proud to have built  
a lively graduate community  
on Penn's campus

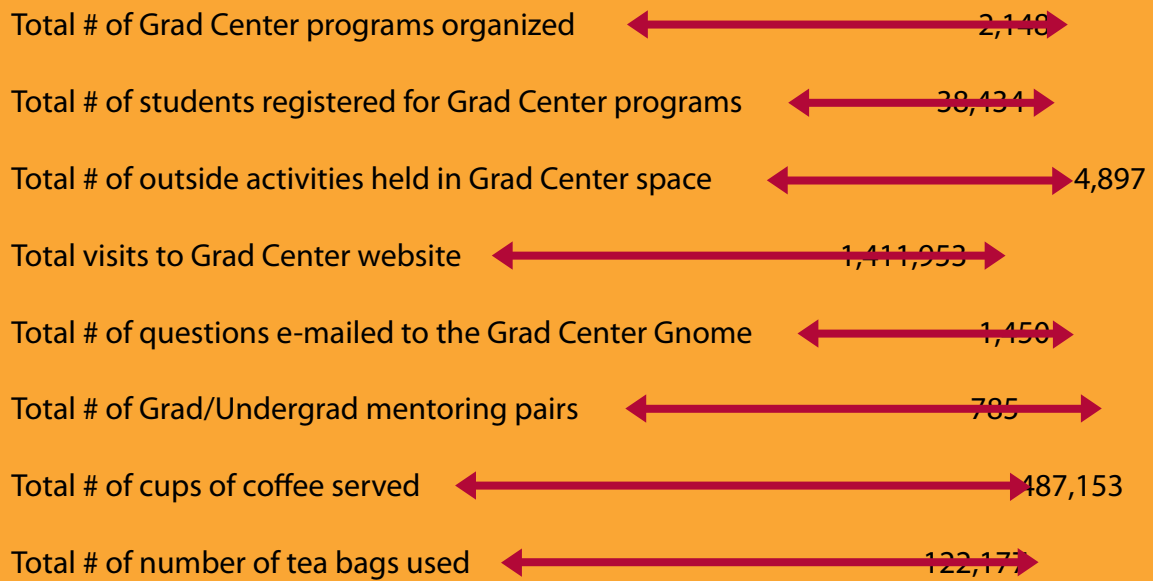
We would have been unable to make this successful journey without support, however. The Graduate Student Center was extremely fortunate to be created under a University administration that allowed us to develop slowly and deliberately. The many achievements that we boast today were fostered over time and with some bumps along the way. At the time we opened, there were very few University-wide grad center models for us to follow. We were allowed to take risks and work through mistakes; this environment served us well.

We have had many enthusiastic campus partners as well. The University Life Division, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships, the Penn Library, and the University's 12 graduate schools, among others, have worked with us to provide much-needed programming for grad students.

Over the years, we also received a lot of financial support and sound advice from the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA) and the Graduate Student Associations Council (GSAC), which merged with GAPSA in 2008. Student leadership continuously helps to shape the Grad Center.

We are very proud to have built a lively graduate community on Penn's campus, and look forward to serving this population for many more years.

Anita Mastroieni, Ed.D.  
Founding Director



## 2001 - 2011 Grad Center Stats

Over the last 10 years at the Grad Center



## The Proposal

In December 1999, the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA) and the Graduate Student Associations Council (GSAC) submitted a “Proposal for a Graduate Student Center at Penn: GAPSA/GSAC Multi-Year Proposal in support of the Agenda for Excellence” to University Administration. The convincing proposal outlined the benefits of having a center dedicated to graduate students on our campus, similar to existing centers at Yale and Harvard. In uncharacteristically quick fashion (by Penn standards), the proposal was accepted, a location identified in a former fraternity house at 3615 Locust Walk, and the creation of a Graduate Student Center at the University of Pennsylvania was underway.

## Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

The Graduate Student Center opened quietly to students on September 4, 2001, and on October 19, the Graduate Student Center held a grand opening celebration with a ribbon cutting ceremony. In attendance were Penn President Judith Rodin, Provost Robert Barchi, GAPSA Chair Christopher Leahy, and GSAC President Darren Glass. At the time the Center consisted of only two floors and employed one full time staff member, a part time staff member and eight graduate fellows.

Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, the Grad Center hosted a week-long opening celebration consisting of different themed events such as Philadelphia night to learn more about the City of Brotherly love, United Nations of Penn to learn about all the international groups at Penn, Sports Night to discover the recreational opportunities on campus and then to top it all off, a pre-Halloween celebration on October 26. Grad students and Grad Center staff (in costumes!) celebrated the first holiday at the Grad Center. It was a fantastic start to what has been a fulfilling and successful ten years.



Ribbon Cutting, 2001

## Setting the Mission

In August 2001, Anita Mastroieni was hired as the first director of the new Graduate Student Center, and DeAnna Cheung was appointed the part-time administrative assistant. They immediately set out to gather a group of graduate student leaders to draft the mission for the new center. This informal collection of students met – literally sitting on orange crates in the empty Grad Center building – several times to write the original mission statement:

The Graduate Student Center was established to meet the unique needs of graduate and professional students at Penn. The Center:

- empowers graduate and professional students to create and participate in a graduate community at Penn.
- creates intellectual, social, and professional development programs to bring together the wide range of graduate and professional students at Penn for cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural exchanges.
- provides graduate and professional students with a centrally-located home that includes a lounge, computer lab, and meeting space.

Grad student leaders and Grad Center staff and fellows revisited the mission statement in 2003 and added another bullet point:

- provides services to support grad and professional students at Penn and in Philadelphia.

With absolutely no past experience to draw from, we also set Guiding Principles to direct us in 2001 as we decided what programs and services to offer. All of our activities had to:

- build graduate community
  - showcase Penn or Philadelphia resources
  - provide “value-added” to already existing events
  - not duplicate existing programs throughout the University
- If an activity did not meet these principles, we did not offer it.

In 2003, we also crafted a core purpose and core values for the Grad Center:

### Core Purpose

To encourage the development of Penn’s graduate and professional student community through academic and social initiatives.

### Core Values:

- Receptivity
- Adventurous and fun spirit
- Reliability
- Support of the entire graduate student experience

The mission statement, guiding principles, core purpose and core values continue to serve Grad Center staff and fellows today as we create programs, services and initiatives to support the graduate student community.



# Ten Years of Programs

In the 10 years since opening, the Grad Center has organized programs and events designed to enhance the grad community at Penn. From academic programs to language chats, from wine tours to sports broadcasts, the Grad Center has something for any student. The staff immediately set out to accomplish the center's mission of meeting the particular needs of grad and professional students at Penn through teaching workshops, lectures, recreational programs, arts and culture activities, and career/life skills programs.

Today, Grad Center programs continue to provide academic support, social networking, and personal development. Nearly all of our programs are organized by Grad Center Fellows, with input from Grad Center staff and individual student feedback. The result is a programming mix that is by and for graduate and professional students. Program and event highlights from the last ten years are listed below.



At right, top to bottom:

University President Amy Gutmann at GradFest 2008

Provost Vincent Price refereeing Sumo Wrestling at GradFest 2009

Vice Provost for Education Andy Binns with the winners of the Citation Awards, May 2011

## The Navigating Series

While currently the Grad Center offers Navigating the Classroom, Navigating the Dissertation and Navigating the Grant, the program originally started in January 2001 as a series of teaching workshops. The first workshop, "Teaching for Learning: Viewing Your Course from a Student Perspective," presented the learning challenges of a course through the eyes of a student. The Director of Penn's Learning Resource Center led this interactive workshop where strategies for challenging courses were devised while also providing a support system for learners. Also that year workshops were offered on "Grading in the Humanities and Social Sciences," "Teaching with Technology," and "Teaching Portfolio" sessions.

The Navigating the Classroom program has since evolved to include extensive programming from the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Library. Current workshops include "Determining Your Classroom Persona," "Course in College Teaching," "Making Group Work Work," "Managing Your Time While Teaching" and "Blackboard Beyond the Basics: Grade Center, Blogs, Wikis and More." These programs are designed to help graduate teaching assistants be successful in the classroom.

As the Grad Center evolved so did the Navigation series as the needs of the graduate students became more apparent. In the spring of 2002 we began Navigating the Dissertation, which seeks to help doctoral students be successful during the dissertation process through workshops, resources and dissertation groups. A very important development of this series came on July 5, 2005 when the first Dissertation Boot Camp was held. Boot Camp enables students, who are in the final stages of the dissertation process, to work in an environment and support system that allows for intense, focused writing time. The two-week camp included daily four-hour writing session as well as weekly individual appointments with a Learning Resources specialist. This bi-annual event has become a major foundation for the Navigating series, and is widely copied by our peer institutions. The Grad Center's director and associate director wrote about this successful program in "The Few, the Proud, the Finished: Dissertation Boot Camp as a Model for Doctoral Student Support," for the NASPA Knowledge Communities: Excellence in Practice journal in November 2011.

Recognizing additional support needed for doctoral students led to the creation of the Navigating the Grant program in the summer of 2004. Navigating the Grant provides an innovative structure for teaching grant writing to graduate students. With the help of Peer Grant Advisors, graduate students learn how to locate funding sources and craft a proposal during a series of orientation workshops. The program now includes a "Finding Grants Calendar" on the Grad Center website that advertises any grants and fellowships that could fund a student's Masters or Ph.D. Such offices as the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships, Communication within the Curriculum, the Writing Center, and the Center for Teaching and Learning are advertised on the calendar.

Top to Bottom:

2003 Cricket  
World Cup,

Penne Chef  
Giving Heart-  
Healthy Cooking  
Demonstration  
2003,

G8's Response to  
Africa  
Conference  
2006,

Bike Tour 2006,

Morris  
Arboretum 2009



## The World Beyond Penn

The Grad Center also makes great efforts to expose our students to more than just the Penn campus. We fully take advantage of our home city since Philadelphia has such a rich history and cultural opportunities. Not only do our outings give the students a view of the city but it also allows them to meet other graduate students from different schools and departments.

The first outing the Grad Center offered was the Philadelphia AIDS Walk on October 21, 2001, the very same week as our grand opening. Within the first few months of the opening we offered trips to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, tours of the Italian Market and Olde City and our first ski trip.

The Grad Center continues to offer several outings each semester. In the summer and fall there are hiking trips, bike tours, wine and cheese tours, visits to Philadelphia festivals, etc. In the winter the Grad Center takes students to museums and sporting events, and provides discounted tickets to local performances.

## For Your Viewing Pleasure

The Grad Center consistently strives to be flexible and responsive and to student needs. In the spring of 2003 the Grad Center stayed open all night to show Cricket World Cup matches from South Africa. In coordination with the WGA India Club and Rangoli: Indian Student Association, the Grad Center showed a total of 23 matches on the first floor in the Common Room; over 200 students gathered to watch the final match at 2AM. The Grad Center continues to bring international sporting broadcasts to our students, including the Olympics and FIFA World Cups.

However, these televised events are not limited to sports. In 2004 and again in 2008 the Grad Center presented the U.S. Presidential Debates on the big screen in the Common Room, as well as the 2009 Presidential Inauguration.

Not to forget pure fun and enjoyment, the Grad Center has also presented themed and cultural film series. There have been numerous international movie nights as well as viewings of the Godfather trilogy, dance, holiday and sports themed movie nights, Vampire movies and, of course, Philadelphia themed movies.



## Expanding Your World: Intellectual Programs

In our early years, the Grad Center offered Lecture Series events aimed to enhance the intellectual stimulation of the graduate and professional student community by fostering academic exchanges. The first lecture was offered on October 18, 2001 and focused on bio-terrorism, a topical and important matter that concerned many students. A wide range of topics and formats followed.

From 2003-05, "Theory & Practice" dinners offered students the opportunity to discuss the intricacies of practicing academic theory in real world applications. Themes ranged from law to education to public health with faculty and staff from the Penn community facilitating the discussions.

With funding from the Office of the Provost, the Grad Center organized a conference on "The G8's Response to Africa" in the fall of 2006. Graduate students from around the country presented. The keynote address by Kwesi Botchwey -- executive chairman of the Africa Development Policy Ownership Initiative and Ghana's former Minister of Finance -- examined the challenges of African development.

Intellectual Programs now center on the University's academic theme each year. Lectures, discussions, film screenings, and activities have focused on food (2007-08), evolution (2008-09), art and the city (2009-10), water (2010-11), and games (2011-12).

## There's an Event for that...

While the Grad Center likes to have fun we also like to ensure we are providing programs and events to enrich the lives of our students. Our Personal Development events, Language Chats and Mentoring Program are good examples of this.

The Grad Center started off with an event on Secrets to Grad School Success, took place on November 16, 2001, and was attended by a mixture of students. Since that first event the Grad Center has offered personal development programs in public speaking, debt management, music appreciation, dining etiquette, cooking, gardening, knitting and much more.

The Grad Center also educates graduate students on how to create successful mentoring/mentee relationships with the Graduate/Undergraduate Mentoring Program. Established in October 2003, the program aims to match undergrad students seeking guidance about the graduate school experience with Penn grad students. In partnership with GAPSA and the UA, the Grad Center Mentoring fellow works to match these students based on common interests, academic programs and areas of specialization. Grad students are asked to meet with their mentees at various points in the semester to give direction on a range of things from the application process, classes to take as an undergrad or sort through priorities to come to a conclusion about the future.

In the first year there were 36 mentoring pairs, and today the program supports 247 pairs. More than 785 undergraduate students have been mentored since the program began. Not only does the program enable graduate students to be in a leadership role but it also teaches them how to be good advisees for the mentors they have in their own academic careers. The program has offered "how to be a good mentor" workshops, leadership panels with graduate students from different schools discussing program topics, and graduate/undergraduate socials to promote further relationship building.

Finally, the Grad Center also conducts weekly language chats for novice speakers and those wanting to maintain their skill level. The first language chat took place in the spring of 2002 with a group of students meeting to enhance their Spanish speaking abilities. Today students gather to chat in Chinese, German, Italian, Japanese and many other languages. Language Chats continue to offer a structural way for students to meet others outside their disciplines while maintaining valuable language skills.



Grad Center, 2007





# Services, Resources & Facilities

From the beginning the Graduate Student Center sought to provide services for Penn students that they could not get anywhere else, and to maintain information about resources that did exist elsewhere on campus, supplying our students with a comprehensive support system.

## Home Away from Gnome: The Graduate Student Center Building

When President Judith Rodin accepted the Locust Walk Advisory Committee's recommendation to create a dynamic graduate student-oriented hub in the heart of campus in 2000, the next step was to begin creating the space for this hub. What used to be a fraternity house at 3615 Locust Walk was gradually converted into the Graduate Student Center. With only the first and second floor renovated, rented furniture and free coffee, the center opened its doors on September 4, 2001.

Within one year, it was obvious that the Grad Center space was not large enough to meet student demand. In the spring of 2003, with funding from GAPSA, GSAC and the Office of the Provost, the third floor was renovated and opened, greatly increasing the amount of meeting space for students and programs. This additional floor provided two lounges, two small meeting/study rooms and a large multipurpose room. During the Third Floor Grand Opening celebration in April of 2003 more than 130 students visited the new space and enjoyed refreshments, movies, raffles and free massages. In short order, the third floor enhanced the quality of life at the Grad Center for our students.

Two years after the third floor renovation the Center became even more accessible with the addition of an elevator. The Center remained open during the long, noisy and dirty construction. The project was completed in May 2005 and to celebrate we hosted an "Elevation Celebration" with giveaways of "elevator music" CDs, a raffle for the first ride in the elevator, and a screening of the movie "Shaft." Along with the elevator addition, the Grad Center was able to create an outdoor terrace that provides additional space for students to meet and hang out.

Now ten years after it offered its first cup of free coffee, the Grad Center building has three dedicated floors for graduate students, which include five meeting rooms and a large common room, an elevator, wireless computing with a computer and printing lab, the Gnome's Café that opened in 2010 and, of course, a variety of free coffee and tea.

**Room Reservations:** The Grad Center has always been a space for students. With a large common room on the 1st floor many students visit each day to do work, read the paper, meet with friends or just take a break and have some coffee. If students need a dedicated space to meet with fellow students, rooms on the 2nd and 3rd floors can be reserved at no charge. As the Grad Center is considered "neutral" territory and is centrally located, it is a convenient location for all grad and professional students.

Since 2002, the rooms at the Grad Center have been reserved for 4,897 activities. Reservations are made for student organization meetings, study groups, TA office hours, classes and recitations, dissertation groups, telephone interviews, workshops, and receptions. The variety and quantity of activities taking place in the Graduate Student Center is a testament to the vibrancy of our graduate and professional student community, and the role of the Grad Center in that community.

## Services & Resources

Where do you go when you have a question that no one seems to know the answer to? The Graduate Student Center of course! For questions about everything from the closest bank or where a building is on campus to notary services or campus employment, the Grad Center is a hub of information.

**Grad Center Gnome:** Created in 2004 as a friendly, easy way for grad and professional students to get info online, the Grad Center Gnome is never more than a click away. To ask the Gnome a question, students just click on his picture on our web page, or go directly to [www.gsc.upenn.edu/services/gnome](http://www.gsc.upenn.edu/services/gnome). Questions are automatically forwarded to Grad Center staff for a speedy and knowledgeable reply.

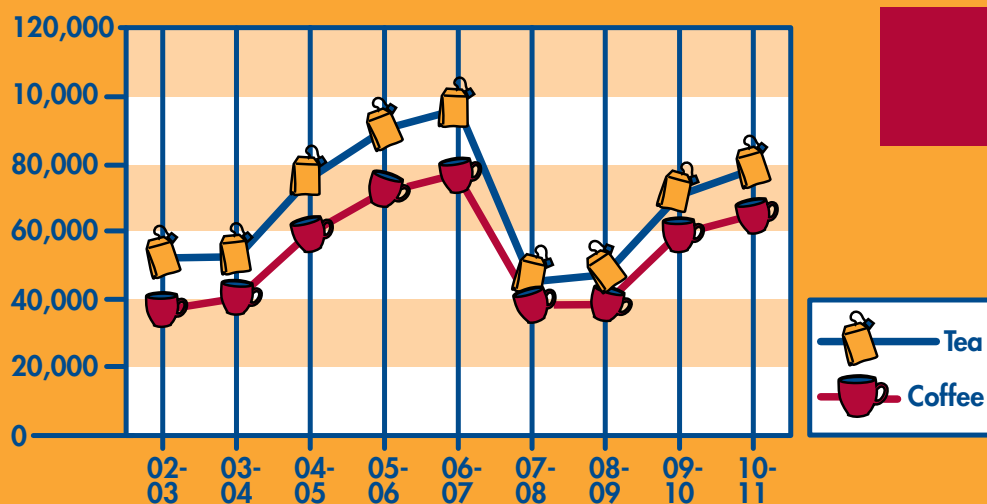
Since 2004, the Gnome has received over 1,450 e-mailed queries from students. Questions ranged from student health insurance to student loans, and from finding music practice rooms to finding a good haircut. In 2009, the Gnome also began posting and “tweeting” helpful advice and program announcements on Twitter and Facebook.

The Grad Center is also connected to graduate students through our website, on the Grad Tab of the Penn Portal, and through our weekly listserv announcements. Over 4,000 individuals are currently subscribed to the listserv, and our website gets more than 250,000 visits a year, making the Grad Center a central focus for disseminating important information to grad and professional students. We provide information about our own activities, as well as general information such as student health insurance and graduation deadlines, how to join graduate student groups, etc. We also promote events organized by other campus centers and schools and community service opportunities.

**Notary Services:** We began providing notary services at the Grad Center in 2004 in order to help students handle the myriad of legal documents related to attending university in the U.S., buying a home, applying for utilities, absentee voting, etc. Over 1,000 documents have been notarized at the Grad Center.

**Coffee and Tea:** The Grad Center may be most well-known for serving free coffee and tea all day, every day, to graduate and professional students. This much-appreciated caffeine boost lures students back to the Center, helps build graduate community, generates goodwill, and keeps our students on their toes!

In 2007, we moved to a more environmentally responsible, bring-your-own-mug system. After some initial declines in coffee consumption, students adapted to the system and are drinking more coffee than ever. Since 2001 the Grad Center has served over 487,153 cups of coffee and used over 122,177 tea bags.



Cups of Coffee & Teabags Used

# Graduate & Professional New Student Orientation and Recruitment Activities

Graduate and Professional New Student Orientation (NSO) became part of the Grad Center's portfolio in the summer of 2002. NSO helps new students become familiar with the campus and Philadelphia community, as well as with the many important resources provided by the University. While the 12 graduate schools furnish their own academic orientation, the Graduate Student Center strives to introduce graduate and professional students to life outside of the classroom.

Each year the graduate and professional orientation is planned by a Graduate Assistant from the Graduate School of Education's Higher Education Management program, with input from the graduate schools and resource centers at Penn.

**New Student Communications:** Initially, incoming graduate and professional students received the Grad Center's Ready for Penn pamphlet along with their acceptance or matriculation materials, which conveyed to students important information about relocating to Penn. Today, all of that information is disseminated through the graduate admissions website, which we helped to develop with the Office of the Provost in 2009. Moving to web-based information saves on printing and mailing costs and allows us to constantly update the information. The Grad Center continues to print the Grad Student Campus Resource Guide, which students prefer to carry around for easy reference during their first weeks on campus. In 2011 we made the Resource Guide available as an electronic publication so students can access the information on their smart phones if they prefer. Over the years, our Grad NSO website has evolved as well. Today the website includes a comprehensive calendar of events for new students, links to presentations, a checklist for incoming students, and answers to FAQs.

**New Student Programs:** With new grad students arriving on campus as early as June and as late as September we offer three cycles of orientation in order to accommodate as many students as possible. Each wave consists of programs repeated at different dates and times.

While many of the same NSO sessions occur each year, the size and scope of grad orientation has greatly increased. NSO initially offered information seminars on SEPTA, campus transit, and safety in and around Penn's campus. The main event was the "Get to 'Gnome' Penn" scavenger hunt around campus followed by a happy hour. Fifty students participated and it became a fun and interactive way for students to meet and mingle while getting to know campus.

While these original programs remain, over time we've also added information sessions on Philly Fun and Understanding Student Health Insurance, as well as walking tours of campus and Center City Philadelphia. Beginning in 2007, the Grad Center offered a condensed, One Day Orientation Extravaganza for students arriving right before the start of classes. Held over Labor Day Weekend, the day-long event provides info sessions as well as the Gnome Scavenger Hunt. Current and past Grad Center fellows and student leaders volunteer at the event, ensuring a smooth-running day.

In spring 2011, we also began offering live, interactive online information sessions that provide essential information to incoming students before they arrive on campus, on topics such as housing, information for international students, and tips on academic success.



Registration at NSO events has grown substantially as the reputation and quality of our programming has increased. The chart on page 16 shows the increase of registrations over the last eight years.

Through our NSO programs, not only do students acclimate to Penn and Philadelphia, but they also become familiar with the Grad Center's programs and services. New Student Orientation has become a vital part of life at Penn, and is gaining a reputation among our peer institutions; Anita Mastroi-eni presented about Penn's successful grad orientation program at the National Orientation Directors Association annual meeting in 2011.

**Student Recruitment:** The NSO GA is also involved in the recruitment/admissions process for the University's 12 graduate and professional schools, by providing tours of campus, presentations on graduate student life at Penn, and participation in resource fairs and accepted students' days. In addition, Grad Center staff field admissions-related emails and phone calls each year from prospective students.

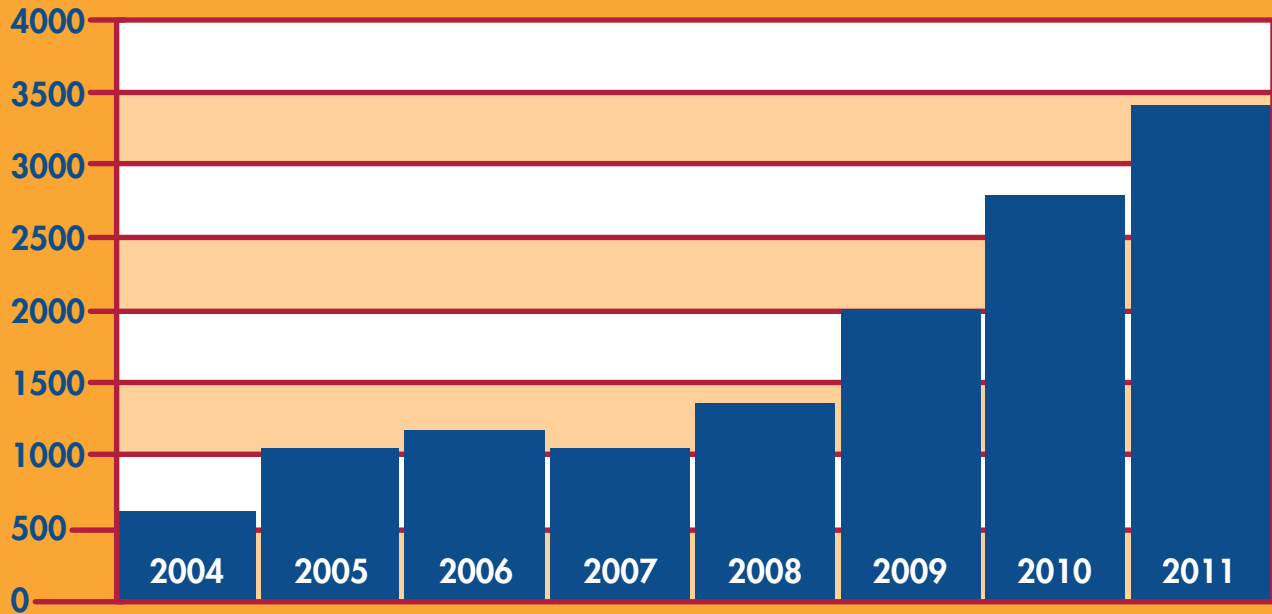
We've also helped the Office of the Provost develop an eye-catching Grad Life brochure that supplements academic recruitment materials, as well as a comprehensive website with centralized graduate admissions information.

Penn is one of only a handful of universities to provide a Graduate Student Center. The Grad Center's presence in the recruitment process allows us to showcase this valuable resource, helping students make an informed choice about matriculating at Penn.

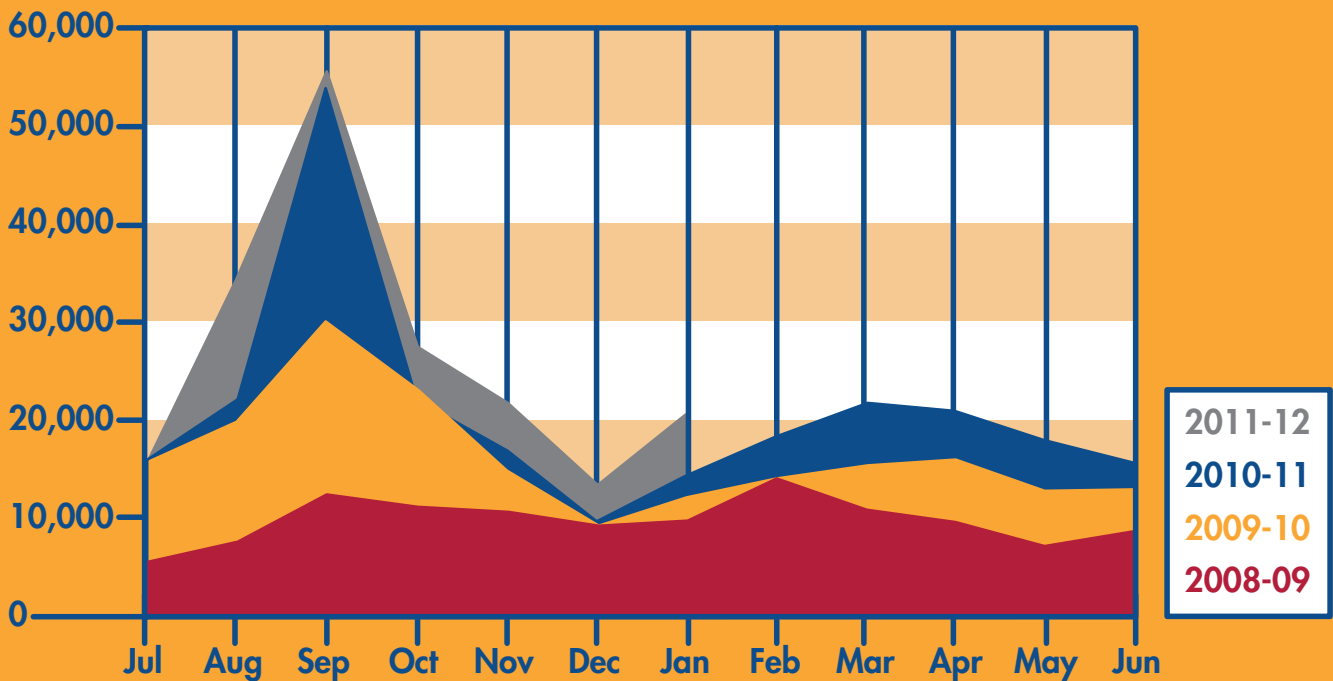


Top to Bottom: NSO 2006, Gnome Hunt 2006, NSO 2011

## New Student Orientation Participation



## Website Page Visits



# The Grad Center & Family Center Websites

The Grad Center website (<http://www.gsc.upenn.edu>) has been in existence since the Center opened and it continues to be a resource for graduate and professional students.

The current design of the site reflects the Graduate Student Center's mission, vision and personality. Just as importantly, users find it easy to navigate, quick to load, accessible, and informative.

Students can learn more about the Grad Center's spaces and easily request room reservations online for study groups, meetings, workshops, etc. They can learn more about the Grad Center's upcoming events, register for free events and see what tickets are on sale. The web site is also the conduit for students to apply to our many matching programs, including our mentoring program, peer-to-peer grant advising program, and our dissertation buddies program. Last but not least, one of the primary purposes of the web site is to host the myriad resources available to graduate students. Currently, the web site provides links to campus and Philadelphia resource guides, and information on academic policies, funding, part-time employment, student organizations, tax information, legal services and more.

Because of all of these benefits, website usage has greatly increased. As the graph indicates we see our highest usage at the beginning of the year for New Student Orientation, and every year, usage increases at a steady rate.

In 2004, we added the first dynamic application of the Grad Center web site, allowing students to register for free events. Over time, we added a backend intranet system where we store important documents and the registration databases in a password-protected site, so that our fellows can access this information from anywhere. This system was eventually upgraded so that event information entered by fellows automatically and dynamically appears on the Grad Center public web site. The intranet system also includes an assessment feature, allowing staff and fellows to easily access and parse events and event registrations. For example, one can search for the number of events held in a specific amount of time; view the number of registrations in different ways such as by school; assess event worksheets, etc.

The Grad Center staff also provides technical support for the Family Center web site ([familycenter.upenn.edu](http://familycenter.upenn.edu)). Like users of the Grad Center's site, students with children can learn more about the Family Center facilities, events, and resources through its web site. Also, the Family Center web site allows students to join the Family Center, sign up for the student parent mentoring program, and apply for Family Grants. To achieve efficiencies, the Family Center uses the same backend intranet system as the Grad Center.

These complex web enhancements were all designed by the Grad Center's Web Fellows under the direction of Associate Director DeAnna Cheung. We have been extremely fortunate to have such talented students supporting these efforts, and saving us literally hundreds of thousands of dollars in web support!

# Family Resource Center

Even though the Grad Center opened its doors over 10 years ago we are still finding new ways to assist our students. The Grad Center began offering activities and resources for students with children in 2005. It quickly became apparent that this population needed additional support. Grad Center Director Anita Mastroieni and Associate Director for Education in the Provost's Office Karen Lawrence wrote a proposal for the creation of a separate center dedicated solely for students with children. University Administration approved the proposal, and work began to identify an appropriate location. An innovative space sharing solution was eventually developed. A bright airy rehearsal space in Houston Hall that is used by student performing arts groups in the late afternoons and evenings was selected to serve as the Family Resource Center during the day, and the Family Center opened in January 2010. The Family Center's scope was soon expanded to include post-doctoral fellows who are parents. More than 200 students and post-doctoral fellows with children have registered with the Family Center since its opening.

The Family Center has become a hub for information, resources, activities, and advocacy for parenting scholars. The Center includes a children's play area complete with toys, books, stuffed animals; a private lactation room equipped with a breast pump; and a community bulletin board. The Family Center received generous start-up support from the Hassenfeld Family Initiatives of Hasbro, the Trustees' Council of Penn Women, and GAPSA.

Much like the Grad Center, the Family Center maintains a comprehensive website, email listserv, and Facebook page so parents can stay connected.

The Center also has developed several successful initiatives to support parenting scholars. New parents often struggle to maintain balance between family obligations and academic progress. The Student Parent Mentoring Program fosters supportive relationships between new and experienced student parents to assist with this transition.

In 2011 Penn introduced an Emergency Backup Child Care Program for students and post-docs with children. Funded by GAPSA, the Office of the Provost, the Office of Biomedical Postdoctoral Programs, the Office of the Vice Provost for Research, and the Vice Provost for University Life, and administered by the Family Center, this program provides in-home back up child care during unexpected or emergency situations so that our parenting scholars can complete academic work and training.

Another important initiative developed in 2011 was the Family Grant Program, which provides need-based grants to Penn PhD students with children. Funded by the Provost's Office, the program provides grants of up to \$2,500 to parents to help them continue in the academic pipeline. It is our hope that the support offered by the Family Resource Center assists our parenting scholars in their efforts to complete their academic training and contributes to the family-friendly environment at Penn.

Top to Bottom:

Men's Soccer  
Team Lesson,

Welcome Back  
Brunch,

Halloween Family  
Brunch,

Welcome Back  
Brunch

(All 2011)



## Time to Celebrate

To mark our 10th anniversary, the Grad Center planned a celebration for the 2011–2012 academic year.

A special 10th anniversary logo was designed for the Grad Center; the logo adorned t-shirts and travel mugs that were given out during NSO, our birthday party on October 19, 2011, and throughout the year. In May of 2012, all the graduate fellows that have worked at the Grad Center during the last ten years are invited to a reunion in recognition of their assistance in achieving the Center's mission.

In 2011-12, the University is also celebrating the Year of Games, and we used that opportunity to host several game-themed events as part of our anniversary celebrations. Grad students participated in a Rubik's Cube competition, bowling, Wii tournament, and Quizzo during our anniversary year.

We also wanted to include our vibrant graduate alumni community in our anniversary celebrations. Alumni gatherings off campus occurred during the year in Philadelphia, New York and Washington, D.C. Area alumni were invited to a reception to hear Vice Provost for Education Andy Binns discuss improvements to graduate education and thank them for their support of the graduate and professional student community at Penn. The Pennsylvania Gazette alumni magazine also profiled the Grad Center in November 2011.

These celebrations provided us with the occasion to review the growth of the Graduate Student Center, to reflect on its many achievements, and to document them here. We look forward to another successful decade of serving and supporting Penn's graduate student community.



# Grad Center Staff & Fellows

## Director

Anita Mastroieni (2001 - Present)

## Associate Director

DeAnna Cheung (2001 - Present)

## Administrative Assistant

Jamie Young (2007 - 2009)

## Program Coordinator

Jessica Allen Bolker (2010 - Present)

## Housekeeper

Fred Kashow (2001 - Present)

## Lecture/Intellectual/Penn Theme Fellows

Katie Giegengack (2001 - 02), Elizabeth Ehmann (2003)  
Tonya Taylor (2002 - 03), Rene Luis Alvarez (2003 - 04)  
Alexandra deRenzy Channer (2005), Aida Gureghian (2005 - 07)  
Allison Evans (2007 - 10), Caroline D'Angelo (2010- 11), Lisa Stewart (2011 - 12)

## Arts, Culture & Recreational Outings Fellows

Anna Grosz (2001 - 02), Karen Warren (2001 - 03), Mauricio Rodas (2001 - 02)  
Kate Robertson (2001 - 02), Melanie Watson (2002 - 04), Danielle Bujnak (2002 - 03)  
Nicole Maurantonio (2002 - 03), Stephanie Saunders (2003 - 04), Jenny Ko (2004 - 06)  
Beverly Frazier (2004 - 05), Cynthia Bartus (2004 - 06), Lizelle Arellano (2006 - 07)  
Kara McGrorty (2006 - 07), Emily Wengrovius (2007 - 08)  
Kristen Gardella (2008 - 11), Leslie Archer (2011 - 12)

## Ph.D./T.A. Support Fellows

Jennifer Hallam (2001 - 03), Elisabeth Herschbach (2002 - 04)  
Laura Lanza (2002 - 03), Meltem Turkoz (2002 - 03), Nicole Maurantonio (2003 - 04)  
Kimberly Sambol-Tosco (2004 - 06), Meredith Wooten (2004 - 06)  
Cassia Cearley (2004 - 06), Charles Davis II (2005 - 06), Robert Riggs (2005 - 06)  
Rebecca Cutler (2006 - 07), Dana Dabek-Milstein (2006 - 07), John Roper (2006 - 09)  
Jennifer Ryan (2006 - 08), Nona Carter (2007 - 08), Sarah Salwen (2007 - 08)  
Kyung-Nan Linda Koh (2007 - 08), Will Kuby (2008 - 09), Jun Li (2008 - 09)  
Jane Anderson (2009 - 10), Troy Thompson (2009 - 10), Sarah Sawah (2009 - 10)  
Jessica Peake (2010), Justin Bolker (2010 - 11)  
Karry He (2011 - 12), Danielle Forsythe (2011 - 12)

Film Fellow  
David Palame (2001 - 02)

New Student Orientation Coordinator  
Matthew Essman (2002 - 03), Suzette Escobar (2003 - 04)  
Sonja Krause-Burkins (2004 - 05), Margaret Lucas (2005 - 06), Brenda Brand (2006 - 07)  
Julia Mazzeo (2007 - 08), Dara Wathanapaisal (2008 - 09), Logan Thurnauer (2009 - 10)  
Jessica Prach (2010 - 11), Meryem Akram (2011 - 12)

Outreach / Publicity Fellows  
Atissa Banuazizi (2002 - 03), Michelle Icenogle (2002 - 04)  
Gregory Buckingham (2003 - 05), Meredith Wooten (2004 - 06)  
LaToya Clark (2006), Aviva Hirschfeld (2007)  
Christopher Van Orden (2007 - 08), Tiffany Parnell (2008 - 09)

Web Fellows  
Blakeman Esselystyn (2001 - 02), Amy Weiss (2002 - 03)  
Joshua Capitanio (2003 - 05), Priya Maheshwari (2005 - 07), Zhinan Han (2008 - 10)  
Qian Zhang (2010 - 11), Praveen Vijapurapu (2011-12), Pan Bo (2012)

Mentoring Fellows  
Hilal Nakiboglu (2003 - 04), Kimberly Sambol-Tosco (2003 - 05)  
Claire Jansen Klieger (2004 - 05), Sarah Salwen (2005 - 07)  
Charles Davis II (2007 - 08), Jane Anderson (2008 - 09), Toni Gordon (2009 - 10)  
Karin Swartz (2010 - 11), Stephanie Thistle (2011 - 12)

Career / Life Skills / Personal Development Fellows  
Amy Lam (2001 - 02), Annapurna Valluri (2002 - 06), Meredith Wooten (2006 - 10)  
Ankur Shah (2008 - 09), Amruta Inamdar (2009 - 10), Troy Thompson (2008 - 09)  
James McGinley (2010 - 11), Catherine Kane (2010 - 12)

GradFest Fellow  
Lauren McDonnell (2009 - 10)

Coordinating Fellow  
Meredith Wooten (2010 - 12)

Family Resource Center Fellows  
Will Nisbet (2010), Jamila Medley (2010 - 12), Troy Thompson (2010)  
Meredith Wooten (2010 - 11), Chelsea Switzer (2011-12)



