

Graduate Program in International Affairs, The New School Minutes from 2/7/2008 MCID Concentration Meeting

The objective of the meeting was to hear from students their thoughts about the concentration, starting with what led them to the MCID concentration, what their academic and professional backgrounds in the fields of media and culture (if any) were, how they envision the concentration and what suggestions and ideas they have for improving and moving the concentration forward. The emphasis of the meeting was collaboration among current and potential students in MCID.

Prof. Khruscheva began the meeting by giving a brief overview of the MCID Concentration, and outlining the above objectives. The student attendees then went around the room introducing themselves and sharing a bit of their background. The discussion then turned to students' thoughts on the concentration. The key points that were raised included:

- Several students have extensive experience in the areas of film production, and other more technical/practical aspects of media work. This could be a potential starting point for student-led workshops and/or working groups designed to share this skill set with other GPIA students interested in gaining such skills to supplement and complement their work/studies in International Affairs, i.e. those who don't necessarily just want a degree in Media Studies.
- Other ideas for incorporating more technical and practical skills-learning in media included collaborating with organizations in New York City working in the areas of Youth and Media – this as a possible practicum option.
- Several students also indicated that they would like to see more emphasis placed on the “culture” aspect of the MCID concentration. But what does culture mean? Suggestions were made for adding more classes that focused on culture, including issues of identity and difference, such as those that have been offered in the past. In the absence of such courses, student-driven conferences or workshops which dealt specifically with and highlighted this issue could fill the gap.
- The idea of a GPIA blog or online forum was raised, and in relation to the above point, the first posts could tackle the issue of culture – what does it mean? Why does there seem to be a lack of interest in it? Is it too amorphous and abstract a subject for students wanting to gain a foothold in the professional/working world after leaving GPIA, etc.?

Jake Perry and Aarti Jhaveri were then introduced as Editor and Assistant Editor, respectively, of the GPIA journal, *Contexts*. They announced that the theme for the upcoming issue will be “imagination.” More information will be made available through the listserv as Jake and Aarti finalize their plans but the students attending were encouraged to start thinking about possible submissions, which can range anywhere from “serious” articles to photo submissions to cartoon strips.

The meeting ended on a note of collaboration and communication and the next steps include creating a discussion board, listserv and/or blog (forum) to allow the conversation to continue and to include other students who were unable to attend this first meeting.

Prepared by Sonja Uwimana