

Mission Statement:

The Graduate Student Welfare Advocacy Group (GSWAG) is a collective of English graduate students and faculty members who are dedicated to fostering an inclusive, compassionate, and justice-centered environment in the department. Our primary goals are as follows:

- Focus on individualized and systemic student welfare and advocacy in addition to the professional and intellectual support that the department and EGSA provide.
- Engage with the difficult questions of prevailing institutional socio-political dynamics and look for actionable goals.
- Foster an inclusive antiracist and supportive environment among graduate students.
- Offer a collective interpersonal space liasoning between students and faculty
- Provide resources to empower students' confidence, wellbeing, and access (local and university-based mental health centers, fitness studios, BIPOC, Disability, LGBTQ+ services and resources, etc.)

GSWAG faculty sponsors assume the following responsibilities:

- Will act as a liaison between students and faculty,
- Should be available to meet 1-2 times a month
- Will advise on matters pertaining to graduate student welfare
- Give insight to department policy and protocol
- Advise on content for documentation and events, and
- Inspire graduate students' pursuits of positive change.

Founder's Note: On the Exigency of GSWAG

The Graduate Student Welfare Advocacy Group (GSWAG) was founded in Summer 2019 by Cara Marta Messina, who was the 2018-2019 English Graduate Student Association (EGSA) President. As the President of the EGSA, Cara was committed to meshing social justice into every facet of her tasks--however, she recognized balancing advocacy and administrative work was not a task every future EGSA President or member would want to undertake. With the help of English faculty and other graduate students, she founded GSWAG to create an institutionalized, sustainable group dedicated to advocacy and acting as a liaison between faculty and students. She was inspired by NextGEN—a justice-, graduate student-centered listserv that branched off a well-established listserv in the field of rhetoric & composition. GSWAG's role is to collaborate with the EGSA, the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), and other individuals or organizations in the English department and across the university. GSWAG provides additional, recognized labor to continue collectively advocating for the welfare of all English graduate students, especially those who are marginalized in the academy, including international students; Black, Indigeouns, and People of Color (BIPOC); LGBTQ+ students; and students with disabilities.