It is with great enthusiasm that I announce my candidacy for Vice President of Internal Affairs for the Graduate and Professional Student Senate. I have represented the School of Art + Art History + Design as a Senator for the past two years and have helped found the Arts Council and created connections between graduate students in the Arts and other members of the graduate community. In addition to my experience as a Senator, I also have been involved in staff management and school leadership positions. Outside of GPSS, I am currently the President of the Art History Graduate Students Association and the Graduate Student Representative on the School of Art + Art History + Design Board. I am finishing my second year of a Ph.D. in Art History with a focus on institutional collecting practice and the role of museums and other non-profits on the arts in the United States.

Support Student Access and Communication
Access is an important issue for graduate students and has become critical this Spring as we move everything online during the COVID-19 crisis. During this time of instability, GPSS can act as a hinge between graduate students and the services that they need, such as technological help, access to libraries, information about building closures, and teaching resources. Looking at next year, we need a graduate Student orientation for all incoming students. It is vital that all students feel welcomed into the community and have an opportunity to learn about services for graduate students when they first arrive and before they start classes.

Mental Health Resources
Graduate school is demanding in an intellectual, mental, physical, and emotional sense. I will continue the important work that Matt and his team have done to support mental health in the Graduate community. Also, I would like to continue the “Self-Care Soiree” events during which students receive an opportunity to participate in relaxing activities aimed at combatting stress during the end of the quarter pinch. Finally, I want to provide students with more access to counseling services using the resource page linked to the GPSS website as a starting point for mental health services offered on campus.

Graduate Student Engagement Through Events
Events offer an opportunity for graduate students spaced out over various campuses a chance to connect, relax, and build community. An experienced event planner, which I did while working for several museums, I would be thrilled to continue to plan events such as the wildly popular “Nightmare at the Museum.” Additionally, I would like to partner with more local cultural centers and sites on campus, such as the Henry Art Gallery, and would like to add some service-based events. It is critical in our current situation for graduate students to give back to the community through volunteer and service projects.