



**Nikta Daijavad**  
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Hi! My name is Nikta Daijavad, and I'm looking to be the GU's next Academic Affairs Officer. In my short time in the MPhil program for International Relations and Politics, I have discovered that Cambridge is exceptional in its commitment to developing a sense of community for its graduate students. There exists a recognition that some of the most valuable learning happens outside of the library and comes from the people we are lucky enough to meet during our time here. As Academic Affairs Officer, I will do everything in my power to facilitate the type of networking that enhances our academic growth, remembering all the while just how much there is to be learned from the people around us. This is a position that I am particularly suited for given my undergraduate experience as the Vice President of Scholarship of UC Berkeley's Panhellenic Executive Council, a role in which I was responsible for promoting exceptional scholarship throughout a community of 1,700 students. If elected, I will pursue three platforms:

1) **Academic Excellence Committee:** My first priority would be assembling an Academic Excellence Committee consisting of one representative from each of Cambridge's 31 colleges. I would meet with these representatives on a monthly basis to get a sense of what academic resources their colleges want to see prioritized, and I would provide time in these meetings for the representatives to brainstorm best practices and learn from the academic programming being done in other colleges. Finally, I would work with these representatives to identify and recognize the academically inspiring stories of some of our fellow graduate students on social media.

2) **Graduate Study Hours:** Studying doesn't have to be a solitary endeavor – it can be a social activity! As Academic Affairs Officer, I would organize biweekly Graduate Study Hours. Snacks would be provided by the Graduate Union, and graduate students could come do work, meet with study groups, and get to know new people. This would break up the routineness of the study habits we sometimes get into and would encourage us to approach our work with a fresh perspective. I will keep records of all those present at each event and then award the college with the highest level of participation at the end of each term with a pizza party.

3) **Study Skills Lecture Series:** Although our graduate students are likely to have great study skills already, it can always be helpful to brush up on some of the basics. I would host a Study Skills Lecture Series that would include presentations from professors, advisors, and PhD students and would allow us to discuss one particularly useful skill in-depth for an hour. Topics for these lectures could include time management, making the most of office hours, public speaking tips for thesis presentations, and so on.

I would be honored by the opportunity to serve as your Academic Affairs Officer and am confident that I would be able to help you make the most of your experience here at Cambridge!