Background - Need and goals
In January 2012, the GPSS officers and executive committee introduced a proposal to form an ad-hoc committee of senators to examine the organization’s structure, mission, and efficiency. This process was initiated by discussion among the GPSS leaders (officers, staff, and exec committee members) about inefficiencies within the organization, including a growing workload for all officers and lack of senator involvement. The restructuring committee was tasked with identifying the major problems undermining the senate’s effectiveness, as well as recommending solutions to those issues.

What we did
To identify these problems and solutions, we sought feedback from a wide range of GPSS stakeholders. We used both paper and online surveys to contact a large proportion of the GPSS student senators (n=73 out of 163 current senators) and the general graduate and professional student population (n=648 of 13,411). We interviewed staff and officers, and met with the Executive committee, Judicial Committee, and Finance and Budget committees. We also met with Rene Singleton, the Student Activities Office advisor to GPSS, and contacted the Departmental Review Committee via email. We reached out to all Registered Student Organizations that had received funding from GPSS from 2010-2012, but received a very low response rate.

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I. Results

1. Officer Interviews - Unavailable

2. Senator feedback
   We received responses from 72 senators in total using a paper and online survey.

3. Interviews with committees
   Committee Interview Questions
   1. Are there any requirements for being on your committee? If so, what are they?
   2. What are your committee’s most important tasks? (Top 3-5)
   3. What are your committee’s most time-consuming tasks? Please include approximate time breakdown for each task. (Top 3-5)
   4. What are the top 5 problems your committee encounters?
   5. How can your committee be improved?
   6. How can your tasks be improved or made more efficient?
   7. Is recruitment and retention of committee members an issue for your committee? If so, do you have ideas how to resolve this problem?
   8. What else should we know?

Finance and Budget Committee - N/A

Travel Grants Committee -
The travel grants committee generally meets when a decision about which travel grants applicants needs to be made - most of the work by the travel grants committee members is done in their own time reviewing and scoring applications and then meeting to make a decision. Also, there is also a few hours preceding and following travel grants decisions done by the Treasurer and staff. Therefore, the travel grants committee did not meet with the Restructuring Committee, but two committee members responded to the 8 focus group questions via email.

One problem of note with the committee was that “since there are no rubrics on which to rate travel grant applications, ratings seemed to be subjective between members of the committee.” Other problems indicated incomplete applications, the evaluation and decision to fund which applicants, and finding a meeting time that worked for everyone. Suggestions for improvement included: agreement on a rubric on how to rate applications (EX: “How do we rate someone early in their program vs. late in their program?”), improvement on electronic application system and timely evaluations form committee members. One member stressed the importance of this committee and that
“students appreciate the opportunity to get funds from GPSS.” Better communication about the availability of travel grants, the process and deadlines could also improve the process. Limitations: unfortunately, this only reflects the opinions of two committee members as the others could not meet and did not answer the inquiry via email.

Judicial Committee -
The Judicial Committee meets once a quarter and more often if needed in order to provide advice on proposed changes to the bylaws. They have been informed of our upcoming proposal of recommendations and understand that they will be needed in order to review and create/draft language for the bylaw changes. As the committee had only met once prior to the interview they did not provide many suggestions on how to change their role within GPSS.

4. Travel grant recipients and RSOs

Travel Grants Applicant Survey:
This survey utilized the first 7 questions from the Registered Student Organization survey. 24 applicants from the most recent application period (Jan. 15 to Mar. 15, 2012) were contacted via email to answer questions on catalyst, consisting of both students that had received funding and students who had not from GPSS. 13 students submitted responses (54.2%), 1 person viewed the survey but did not submit (4.1%), and 10 students did not respond (41.7%). Of these, only 2 received full funding (15.7%), 3 received partial funding (23%), and 8 did not receive any funding (61.5%). Applicants said they had heard of GPSS as a source of funding from: 2 from the UW website (15.4%), 4 through other students and friends (30.7%), 2 from their department (15.7%) from faculty and OMRR, the Moot cohort Honor Board, email from Graduate Program Coordinator, or they used to work at GPSS. Many students depended on the money in order to go to their conference, their departments did not offer funding for such events and they did not know of other sources of funding. Positive experiences with the application process directly correlated whether the student received any funding (38.5%), and all other applicants either had a neutral (15.4%), or had negative experiences (38.5%), and one person did not respond (7.7%).

Of the 5 positive responses, students additionally added:
“Colin (Treasurer Goldfinch) was incredibly helpful and prompt in answering all of our questions,” and “communication was clear and timely.”

However, the negative responses included:
“I was hoping to receive funds for presenting at my first conference as a graduate student. But having to pay out of pocket when I have a low budget has made it into a negative experience.”

“Spend a lot of time putting together the application, but did not get any money or an explanation as to why. It was fairly frustrating.”

“The downside of the application process was that the way the deadlines are set up, I attended the conference before I knew whether I had received funding. Since there used to be better odds that you would get the funding, I hoped for the best and paid for the conference fees, flight and hotels without confirmation from GPSS. It would be great to update the schedule so that you can have confirmation before you actually attend the conference.”

“In my experience, GPSS is ineffective, incompetent and unnecessary.” (this person stated earlier that they had not received funding and has “been shot down the last four years. I don’t have much faith in y’all as representatives.”)

This trend continued, with frustrations including: difficulty figuring out budget numbers, misunderstandings related to criteria, certain items in the application that were not applicable and delayed feedback about how to fill these items out, and lack of feedback about why they were not funded. When comparing this experience to other organizations, 4 of the 5 students that had positive experiences said that the process at GPSS was good, better or favorable to other experiences. The fifth individual, and another respondent, said the experience was about the same. 5 respondents said this was an unfavorable experience, their own department did it better, the process took too long, there were no interviews (this could also be a suggestion) or that they “got other sources of funding that were more competitive.” Suggestions included emailing applicants who apply when they submit all documents, better explanations about items that do not apply to every application (no examples were given), and “focus on clear and measurable goals.”

5. General student body feedback

In the online general student survey, 61% of students knew what GPSS was, while 23% did not and 16% weren’t sure. In an open-ended question, most students who were familiar with GPSS associated it with student advocacy or representation (51% mentioned), either within the university (18%) or in Olympia (14%). Less than 10% of responses mentioned each of the following services: money for student groups or departments, social events or networking, and keeping students informed about events. When asked about specific services, most students said that they knew about representing students to the UW administration, lobbying in Olympia, or student socials.
Some knew about travel grants and advocacy for child-care, and fewer than 40% knew about each of the following: federal lobbying, the higher education summit, departmental allocations, and special allocations to registered student organizations. Most of these services were rated as important or very important to students, but the importance of child-care advocacy, the higher education summit, and special allocations to RSOs were mixed or neutral. A large number of students (39%) thought that organizing socials was not at all or not very important. In comments, some students noted that they were not represented by GPSS, especially distance and online students. Many students suggested that we needed to promote GPSS and increase visibility. There was also quite a bit of negative feedback about the universal UPASS, although this was not addressed in the survey. The results clearly show that we need to increase our outreach to students to make sure that all students are informed about services available to them, such as departmental allocations and travel grants. We also need to make sure that non-traditional students (distance, online, and foreign, in particular) feel included in the governing process. Overall, there was support and appreciation for the services GPSS provides.

6. Investigated similar programs at other universities and talked to ASUW
Comparison to governments at other universities reveals that other schools faced comparable problems with workload. At other schools, compensation for officers is much less (for example, $1000-2000 per quarter at UC Santa Barbara, no tuition waivers at UT Austin). At the same time, perhaps because of this lower pay, the governments tend to include many more officer positions. Besides paying less, this seems to divide up the work so that each officer’s commitment is smaller (at least at some schools). At the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, officers are only expected to put in about 10 hours per month of work; I assume the scope of this government is much smaller than GPSS’s. UT-Austin recently restructured to include only one vice-president position, instead of two, which apparently marks less of an involvement in state politics.

The most relevant comparison for GPSS is probably ASUW, as we work with comparable budgets (compared to the other grad governments, at least), constituency sizes, and at least some of our scope overlaps. ASUW has also found success by including more leadership positions with less pay; there are 11 undergraduate positions on the board of directors, and more than 60 paid student employees. None of these employees are being paid as much hourly as GPSS employees, and there are no tuition waivers. It seems likely that compensation expectations (and needs) are different for grad and undergraduate students, so this may not be a viable model for us. The ASUW is structured as a non-profit, and like the current GPSS there seems to be a tendency
for the heart of the organization to be the officers, with the senators simply showing up to vote on resolutions. ASUW Director of University Affairs Evan Smith noted that the biggest problems facing ASUW were lack of student awareness and inconsistency in branding and marketing problems, which ASUW is trying to combat with a new communications program.

Two comparisons of interest: for lobbying, ASUW hires a part-time lobbyist. This is a hired, rather than elected position, and is mostly active during winter quarter. The ASUW also includes a full “Office of Government Relations”, which includes a director who lobbies on the state level, an assistant director who lobbies on the city level, a legislative coordinator who contacts legislators for campus appearances, etc., and an organizing coordinator, who organizes lobby day, phone calls, etc. This seems to be an effective structure, and one we should look into if forming a senator lobbying committee.

Secondly, ASUW recruits student volunteers for its committees from all over campus, not just from the ASUW senate. This program is marketed as “UW Leaders”, and is aggressively advertised in the Daily, by email, and in campus residences throughout the school year. As the GPSS considers expanding its committee work, we should look into these methods of recruiting and retention.

7. Summary of major problems identified:

* Officer hours
* Community involvement
* GPSS knowledge and outreach
* Institutional continuity
* Unsustainable officer compensation
II. COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT

1. Why we need more committees

   Based on feedback, we believe that many of the problems with the current GPSS structure could be righted by creating more committees within the organization. Two of the major problems this would address are the high officer workload and lack of involvement by senators. All of the officers stated in interviews that they felt like they had too many obligations, and that some of these obligations were not core to their position (e.g., organizing socials for the Treasurer). At the same time, 19% of senators responded in a survey that they wanted more opportunities to be leaders, and 37% felt frustrated that it was too hard to become involved with GPSS unless serving on a committee. At the same time, we have identified some areas where GPSS needs to improve its efforts - namely, increasing outreach and communications (a large number of students were unfamiliar with GPSS), mobilizing students for lobbying, and improving the GPSS website. We propose creating six new committees, which will provide more opportunities for leadership and involvement for senators, shift certain obligations off of the officers, and help GPSS better connect with the student body.

2. Proposed committee structure, senator/volunteer involvement

   In order to allow committees to more effective while also allowing the Executive officers more freedom in their duties, we propose electing/appointing a Committee Chair for each committee. The Committee Chairs would, in turn, report and meet with the Executive officers in a meeting separate from the current Executive meeting. This proposed change would increase senator involvement by allowing more people to chair committees and giving them a vested interest in GPSS’ success. Additionally, it would decentralize committee control and allow senators more input instead of relying on an Executive officer to chair the committee, in addition to his/her other GPSS commitments. The structural change would also allow for increased delegation by the addition of another level/set of officers to work on GPSS business.

   In order to help institutional memory of these committees, we recommend that committee members returning the following year (whether returning as a senator or not) attend the first committee meeting of the following year in order to facilitate hand-off of the committee to the newly elected committee members. This hand-off should coincide with a committee-specific orientation, where committee expectations and goals are outlined to new members.

3. Proposals for new committees:

   University Affairs Committee: Update GPSS Senators and Executive Committee of proposed policy changes and development at the university level. Assists with the planning, publicity, and execution of the Higher Education Summit and Science and
Policy Summit. Propose resolutions in supporting or condemning university policies to reflect GPSS engagement in broader university affairs.

empowered to consider and write legislation that relates to academic issues on or off campus, including how students interact with the administration.

**Lobbying Committee:** Works with the Vice-President to mobilize rapidly for effective representation of graduate and professional student interests in Olympia. Serve as leaders within their respective schools to promote lobbying actions on the part of GPSS (letter writing, postcards, etc.)

**Publicity & Outreach Committee:** Communicate the mission and goals of GPSS more effectively while working with the Secretary and Publications. Works with the Lobbying and Social Events Committee to inform graduate and professional students of opportunities for involvement and is available to speak at department/school orientations. Works with ASUW communications program.

**Social Affairs Committee**

i. Focus on Fall, Winter, and Spring socials
ii. Work with or replace event planner staff position
iii. Initiate and maintain GPSS wide happy hours, trivia, and other low-key events throughout the year
iv. quarterly reports to Senate

**B. Website Maintenance Committee**

i. every three years (see recommendation below)
ii. quarterly reports to Senate
iii. keep information up to date on website
iv. annual survey to senate to review functionality and usability of website
v. orientation video for new senators

**C. Restructuring Committee**

i. monthly progress reports to GPSS Secretary
ii. evaluate strengths and weaknesses of current organization
iii. purpose budget and bylaw amendments to Senate
III. OFFICER STRUCTURE

1. GPSS Officer Compensation

Current Officer Compensation Structure
GPSS has four officers, all of whom are Academic Student Employees (ASEs) as defined by the Union. Officers receive equal stipends and tuition waivers equal to the tuition charged by their respective academic programs. For FY2012, GPSS allocated approximately $72,300 for tuition waivers, $76,600 for stipends, and $19,500 for benefits for its officers. This is a total of $168,400 in officer compensation (~46% of GPSS budget for FY2012).

- Stipends = $15,250 + $3,900 (summer) = $19,150 each ($76,600 total)
- Tuition waivers = $72,307 total
- Benefits = $19,532 total
- GPSS Budget for FY2012 = $364,840

Problems with the Current Compensation Structure
The current officer compensation structure is unsustainable for two reasons.
1. Tuition at the UW is rising while the amount of money allocated to GPSS by the Student Activity Fee (SAF)—our main funding source—will be held constant for the next few years. This means that officer compensation will consume an even larger portion of the GPSS budget in the future.
2. The officer compensation portion of the GPSS budget is a large source of uncertainty. For example, the tuition waivers for four non-resident law students is over 3 times higher than that for four resident Tier 1 students, and this disparity is expected to increase. Since the UW has a limited ability to raise resident undergraduate tuition, the university is compensating for the cuts in state funding by raising the tuition for its professional programs. GPSS needs to avoid a scenario in the future where four officers are elected whose tuition waivers are so large that they cripple GPSS’s operating budget.

UW Office of Budget and Planning - Tuition & Fees and Tuition Tiers

Possible Solutions:

A. Stop providing tuition waivers to the GPSS officers.
(+$72,000 based on 2011/12 budget)
If we no longer give tuition waivers to the officers this would free up a considerable amount of money in the budget that would be used to benefit GPSS in many ways. For example, GPSS could pay for a 5th officer and/or hire more staff to help spread out the officer workload. GPSS could also spend the extra funds on additional programming and services that benefit the graduate and profession student body. Also, eliminating tuition waivers will avoid any problems related to rising tuition costs outpacing the growth of the GPSS budget.

The drawbacks to getting rid of the tuition waivers include (1) possibly violating the work contract established by the Academic Student Employee (ASE) union, (2) removing a major incentive for students who consider running for GPSS officer positions, and (3) the possibility of reducing the officer work output as a result of their lower financial compensation.

GPSS has developed a good working relationship with the ASE union and any changes made our organization as a part of the current restructuring process should help maintain this good relationship. Therefore, any changes made to GPSS officer compensation must not violate the ASE work contract. One solution might be to define the GPSS officer positions in such a way that they are no longer ASEs.

Historically, the GPSS officer elections do not normally attract a large number of candidates for any of the positions. A major concern about eliminating tuition waivers is that without their incentive a situation may arise where no one runs for one of the officer positions. Obviously it’s hard to gauge the likelihood that this might actually happen. The GPSS advisor Rene Singleton mentioned that the tuition waivers were instituted as an incentive to run to office because getting candidates for the elections was a problem. It is not certain that the tuition waivers were successful at increasing the number of candidates each year.

Any decrease in officer compensation risks decreasing officer work output. Without a tuition waiver, the officers will be more likely to prioritize their class work or other school-related obligations over GPSS. This is not to say that there’s an expectation that the officers maintain their current work output while receiving less compensation. Instead, any restructuring plan should try to maintain GPSS’s productivity as an organization by increasing its number of employees.

B. Limit tuition waivers to Tier 1
(+$24,000 based on 2011/12 budget)

Limiting GPSS officer tuition waivers to Tier 1 tuition is another option for both freeing up money in the budget and safe-guarding the budget from disproportionate tuition increases between the various graduate and professional programs.

This option presents a more serious drawback in terms of complying with the ASE union contract. Since the officers would almost certainly remain ASEs by the contract’s definition, reducing their tuition waivers to Tier 1 tuition levels creates a dangerous precedent in the eyes of the union and they don’t want to give the UW
administration the chance to try and do the same to all graduate students. One possibility that should be examined is having the GPSS officers leave the union. Instead GPSS would hire its officers as hourly employees with compensation equivalent to a stipend and a Tier 1 tuition waiver.

The Tier 1 tuition waiver solution may guarantee that no senators with Tier 2 or higher tuition will ever run for office. Hypothetically, if a graduate student has funding for their education at a level higher than Tier 1, then why would they ever choose to run for a GPSS office knowing they would have to pay the difference in tuition?

C. Keep tuition waivers for officers - write budget safeguards into the bylaws

If GPSS continues to provide tuition waivers for its officers, then the GPSS bylaws need to be amended to safeguard the budget from disproportionate tuition increases between the various graduate and professional programs and the possibility of over-spending on officer tuition waivers.

- How would this work? Assuming we can’t partially waive a person’s tuition, how do we account for the candidates’ degree programs during officer elections?

2. Officer Hours and Responsibilities

According to the Elections Packet from 2011:

3.1: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

The GPSS Bylaws, Article V, Section B, outline the general duties of all Officers. All the Officers are responsible for setting GPSS goals and implementing specific actions based on the directives of the GPSS and the Executive Committee. Officers communicate these directives, goals and actions to the graduate and professional student body, University administrators, University faculty, and the community at large. Officers make reports to the Executive Committee and the Senate on progress made toward achieving these directives. A year-end summary report is presented to the Senate.

Officers meet with each other on a weekly basis to keep current on the status of GPSS projects. All Officers are paid to work 19.5 hours per week with a minimum of 10 hours in the office (4 hours for the President) between the standard business hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The remaining hours may be spent attending meetings and holding appointments outside of the office. The office-hours requirement does not apply to the Vice President during the months in which the State Legislature is in session.

Officers may not hold any other Graduate Student Service Appointment, hereinafter referred to as a GSSA, while in office. The GPSS Officers serve a 12-month term, which begins June 20, 2011 and continues until the end of the 2012 spring quarter. While being available to work during the summer is strongly recommended,
exceptions have been granted (see Officers for details). It is strongly encouraged that newly elected Officers be available the week before they officially begin to meet with the existing Officers and ensure a smooth transfer of responsibilities. There is no limit on the number of terms a registered graduate or professional student may serve. All GPSS Officers attend an orientation by the GPSS advisors, held during the first month of their term.

Additionally, the GPSS Bylaws outline the specific duties of each Officer. Here is a snapshot of these responsibilities (at this point, the original document has been adapted, and additions from surveys and interviews are in *italics* or **underlined italics**, to see the original document please refer to the above url):

§3.2: PRESIDENT
- Serves as the official spokesperson for the GPSS.
- Presides at the GPSS and Executive Committee, voting only in the event of a tie.
- Appoints, nominates, or removes GPSS representatives to committees, councils, and other groups.
- Serves as a non-voting member of all GPSS committees, unless otherwise stated in the Constitution and Bylaws.
- Serves on several committees including the:
  - GPSS Executive Committee
    [http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/content/executive-committee](http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/content/executive-committee)
  - Board of Regents
  - University Budget Committee
  - Graduate School Council
  - Graduate School Executive Committee
  - Faculty Senate
  - Faculty Senate Executive Committee
  - Faculty Senate Planning and Budget Committee
  - President's Council
  - President's Student Forum
- Maintains final authority on issues until they can be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee or the GPSS. When immediate action is necessary, the President should solicit assistance from the other Officers.
- Ensures that action on resolutions of the GPSS is taken within four weeks after the date the resolution has been passed. The President shall report to the GPSS on the status of the resolution's implementation.
- Supervises the graduate review survey, including TA, RA, and general graduate and professional student surveys of students in departments up for their regularly scheduled review by the Graduate School, and presents the results to the Graduate School Council.

*Graduate Program Review*: [http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/content/graduate-program-review](http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/content/graduate-program-review)

Via the *Graduate Program Review Committee*:
[http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/content/graduate-program-review-committee](http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/content/graduate-program-review-committee)
• Maintains a good relationship with UAW Local 4121 to coordinate efforts to improve Graduate Student Employee labor conditions.
• Supervises the:
  - President’s Executive Assistant
  - President’s Special Assistant.

§ 3.3: VICE PRESIDENT
• Assumes the duties of the President in the President’s absence or in the event that the President vacates office.
• Oversees graduate student representation on University committees.
• Represents the GPSS to the Washington State Legislature, including but not limited to:
  - Spending 2-5 days a week in Olympia during the legislative session during the Winter quarter and as other duties and time allow during the Spring quarter (it is highly recommended that the Vice President attend school part-time during winter quarter), attending pertinent committee hearings and preparing and giving testimony when relevant, meeting with legislators and staff regarding the GPSS Legislative Agenda, the Washington Student Lobby (WSL) Agenda and other relevant higher education issues
  - Collaborating with other WSL designated school liaisons on top WSL priorities
  - Researching and writing briefs on legislative and/or other issues as specified by the President, GPSS Executive Committee, and/or the GPSS
  - Keeping the GPSS, Executive Committee, GPSS Officers, and individual graduate and professional students informed of issues before the Legislature and other bodies
• Initiates the process of enacting a GPSS Legislative Agenda including but not limited to:
  - Seeking input and bringing forth an initial draft Legislative Agenda, possibly including the creation of a legislative steering advisory committee at the VP’s discretion
    - State Legislative Steering Committee
      [Link]
    - Federal Legislative Steering Committee
      [Link]
  - Presenting a draft Legislative Agenda to the Senate and guiding the process to pass a GPSS Legislative Agenda
• Serves on several committees such as:
  - GPSS Executive Committee
    [Link]
  - ASUW Legislative Steering Committee
- Washington Student Lobby (WSL) State Board
- GSSA Committee.

• Serves as the GPSS representative to the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS) and other groups addressing legislative issues.
• Makes every effort to obtain official positions from the GPSS and/or the Executive Committee on issues being considered by other groups. If no resolution is available, the Vice President should use discretion in either putting forth his or her own opinion, or not commenting until a position is obtained. In these cases, consultation with other GPSS Officers is desirable.
• Recommends GPSS representatives to external committees, councils, and other groups.
• Informs GPSS external committee representatives of GPSS resolutions, positions, and policies, and maintains files of GPSS representatives' reports.
• Directly supervises the:
  - Legislative Assistant

  Top Endeavours: Lobby Day tasks (5hrs); Committee and Task Force Maintenance (4hours); Higher Ed Article Monitoring (2hours); Misc Tasks (2hrs); GPSS Senate Meetings (2)

  - Policy Analyst

§ 3.4: TREASURER
• Administers the GPSS budget.
• Oversees GPSS expenditures and keeps accurate financial records.
• Reports the GPSS financial status to the Executive Committee on a quarterly basis.
• Handles funding requests beyond those approved by the GPSS and transfers funds as described in the Bylaws.
• Ensures that a professional audit of the GPSS budget is conducted each biennium and that audit information is available to Senators upon request.
• Assists Senators and other graduate students in their applications for special, departmental, and travel funds.
• Serves on several committees such as the:
  - GPSS Executive Committee
  http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/content/executive-committee
  - GPSS Finance and Budget Committee
  http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/content/finance-and-budget
  - Services and Activities Fee (SAF) Committee
  - and other committees as needed:
  - Travel Grants Committee
  http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/content/travel-grants-committee
• Serves as chair of the GPSS Finance and Budget Committee.
• Drafts an Officers' proposed budget for the next fiscal year and facilitates the approval process.
• Plans and promotes the Fall and Spring GPSS Socials.
• Manages the administrative details of the office including the computers and filing system.
• Supervises and evaluates administrative staff.
• Oversees GPSS personnel-related issues.
• Presents the current budget to the GPSS at the first meeting of the academic year.
• Supervises the:
  - Office Manager
  - Resources Assistant
  - Event Planner (new position this year)

§3.5: SECRETARY
• Represents and reports graduate and professional student issues to the ASUW Board of Directors (as well as the ASUW Senate and the ASUW Senate Steering Committee, if no other GPSS representative is present) on a weekly basis.
• Develops GPSS publications (such as The Guide to Life) with the Publications Assistant and the GPSS website with the Webmaster.
• Maintains current GPSS membership and mailing lists.
• Distributes announcements and information to Senators.
• Ensures the proper functioning of any GPSS ad hoc committees.
• Serves on the following committees:
  - Executive Committee
  http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/content/executive-committee
  - ASUW Board of Directors
  - Judicial Committee (non-voting member):

  Top Endeavours of committee: Reading emails (15m/wk) and attending meetings (none yet); another said average commitment of 1hr/wk
  - Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program (GO-MAP) Student Advisory Board.

• Serves as the official parliamentarian of the GPSS in accordance with procedure set forth in the most recent edition of Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice Sturgis.
• Coordinates and enhances the diversity efforts of the GPSS.
• Works together with GO-MAP/OMA, the ASUW Commissions (including Joint Commissions Committee), FIUTS (Foundation for International Understanding Through Students), registered student organizations, and other diversity groups to communicate and address diversity needs.
• Funds diversity-enhancing programs using the Diversity Fund.
• Coordinates the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service events with the United Way of King County and The Carlson Center.
• Plans and programs Graduate and Professional Education Week with the UW Graduate School.
• Coordinates recognitions and awards from the GPSS, including the Gold Star Award and, with the Graduate School, the Graduate Program Assistant of the Year Award.
• Supervises the:
  - Publications Assistant
  Top 5 Endeavours:
    - Taking Notes (1-5hrs)
    - Making posters, flyers (at least 5+ as needed)
- Other assigned tasks as needed (varies, 1-2 hours): website updates, communication studies and documents, photo organization

- Webmaster
  • Creates a yearly report for records purposes.
IV. REVISIT

1. Re-evaluate our recommendations and effectiveness of changes

We recommend that the enclosed recommendations be enacted on a provisional basis, so that their effectiveness can be evaluated and adjusted as needed. This should be done by a similar ad hoc committee made up of senators from various schools and programs, who can make recommendations to the senate to continue, adjust, or rescind any provisional changes.

2. Re-visit restructuring committee every 3 years

We recommend that an ad hoc committee meet every 3 years to evaluate the functions and needs of the GPSS, and make provisional recommendations to improve the body as necessary.

V. MISC Issues

1. Other problems

During the course of this committee, we have identified several other areas which could use further deliberations, either within exec or the GPSS as a whole. Unlike the previous recommendations these are not systemic issues to be addressed, but areas where survey responders felt GPSS could improve.

- Travel Grants

The biggest issue with travel grants is funding - students desire more, as well as more transparency with regards to how funding is allocated and how applicants are chosen.

- Support for programs being restructured/eliminated

With the current budget crises, several programs have been threatened with, or undergone, restructuring, consolidation, or elimination. Previous efforts to support students in these programs have been inconsistent. The GPSS should provide a consistent and unified front to University administrators and state/federal legislators to help students in these programs fight for their best interests, which may be lost in budget discussions otherwise. This may also be important in cases where programs are being moved to Educational Outreach.