Call to Order & Adjourn Previous Meeting:

Chris Lizotte (President): I will now call this meeting to order at 5:34pm. Once again, we seem to be having trouble with the projector so unfortunately, I can't show you the agenda but of course you all read and memorized it. As you'll notice, by the way, we have a new seating arrangement. We'll be starting out orienting this way and then switch to being oriented a little towards the center of the room so if you have to turn your chair around go ahead and do that. So that's how we're going to roll. I think it's fitting way to sit for this beautiful spring day we're having. They seem to go together. In the meantime, the first order of business is to actually adjourn the previous meeting since we ended the last meeting without having sufficient quorum to take any action. When 75% of the senate is no longer in the senate meeting, we can no longer do things so another reason why we're seated this way has to do with what we're going to do with later in the agenda so thank you for coming. We have some good stuff coming up. So with that, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting of two week ago.


Ted Chen (Bioengineering): Second.

Approval of Agenda:

Chris L: Are there any objections? Thank you. Now I will entertain a motion to approve the invisible agenda.

Douglass Taber (Evans School of Public Health): So moved.


Approval of Minutes:

Chris L: Any objections? Thank you and finally, the last order of business of administrative things, I'll entertain the motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

Colin Bateson (Mechanical Engineering): So moved.

Bonnie Lau (Speech and Hearing Sciences): Second.

Approval of the Federal Legislative Agenda:
Chris L: Okay, thank you. Our first agenda item is the approval of the federal legislative agenda if we can get this up and running.

Chris Erickson (Vice President): Move to suspend that until the A/V is ready.

Chris L: Would you like to table that?

Chris E: I would say suspend rather than table that since that might kill it altogether.

Chris L: Okay. The motion is to temporarily suspend agenda number 5, which is approval of the federal legislative agenda. Is there a second?

Duru: Second.

**State of GPSS:**

Chris L: Any objections? Great, that actually will allow us to start with the main reason we put you together in these groups. So now I'll hand out some papers to each group. What we've done over the past four weeks or so is there's been a group that's undertaken reflections on what GPSS's core purpose is. A lot of organizations are good at describing what they do and how they do it. Really successful organizations are actually better at describing why they do it. Actually, when they're really good at it, the what and how just follows through. So we reflected on this without intending to make or reinvent what GPSS does. That wasn't the goal for us and it didn't seem like a good use of our time especially since there was a lot of restructuring a couple of years ago. We essentially tried to excavate what already existed and we did that by going through past events and past statements and going on our website. We can see on the piece of the paper, we have three main items. The first of those is the why, is the purpose. Why do we exist and why do we even bother having a government that represents graduate and professional students. The next thing we have is the substance of that purpose, and we'll be discussing each of these items. And the final item is how we execute that purpose in the most effective way possible and that actually comes from the feedback that a lot of you were involved in the focus groups that we had. So we're going to start and we're going to go through each steps and do some discussions in the small group. I hate it when I get into groups and we're told to take notes and everyone kind of scrambles and no one seems to have anything but I'm handing out some clipboards and pencils. We might not have enough clipboards so some of you might have to find a hard surface of some sort. The first thing we want to talk about is the why. The statement we came up with is not meant to define our mission from now until the end of time. It's what we came up with in a very compressed timeframe that we felt best expressed GPSS. We wanted to discuss how it resonates or doesn't resonate with all of you. So it is the Graduate and Professional Student Senate or GPSS is a collaborative space where graduate and professional students can collectively express their voice and instigate change in accordance with their powers. So let's take 2-3 minutes in your groups to chew that around a little bit. Does it resonate with you? Does it seem expansive enough? Does it seem too expansive? Does it seem constricting? If you have to address why this organization exists. Why do we bother, why
do we do this? How does this statement help clarify that?

[Small group discussions]

Chris L: Let's pause here and let's get some thoughts on the board. We'll use the whiteboard. What were some thoughts?

Alma Kahsawnih (Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies): So our group talked about the importance of the senate as another place for representation of graduate students as a source of labor on campus and a position to the union. Another is perhaps it can become a place of intersection where graduate student that needs to interface with other organizations on campus that we can work with on specific actions and allies to other departments and with each other.

Chris L: Excellent. Anyone else? I kind of gave away the whole schtick with putting it all on the paper but for the moment, let's stick with the core purpose statement. I don't want to call it a mission statement since that means very particular things, especially in the Evans School where you do that kind of thing for a living. The discussion around does this accurately reflect who we are or what we want to do?

Jesse Telgan (English): The one thing that I was thinking about that was the articulation of graduate and professional student need as distinguishable from undergrads and I don't know if that needs to be in a statement but I think it's useful for GPSS to articulate.

Chris L: That is a great point. That's why GPSS was founded. We were simply part of ASUW and we woke up one day in 1967 and said we're different. We need a different government. Any other thoughts on that? We'll get concrete in just a second. This is the 'meta' part.

Karen Michael (Public Health - Environmental & Occupational): I just had a question on why we're doing this. Is it the fact that we didn't have people for quorum last meeting or are there other larger issues?

Chris L: That's a fair question. This has been going on for several weeks. For those of you who participated in our senator focus groups where we tried to get people from similar departments, we felt like we've been noticing a drop off in engagement in senate as a body and not necessarily for other things we do. We have spectacularly successful socials, we've done a great job in Olympia and in our ancillary activities but at the heart of what we are, like this here, has seemed to be anemic and we wanted to figure out what that was all about and what we very quickly found out were three major themes. One is that the core of what GPSS is not clear to a lot of people inside and outside the organization. Second is that senate, this place where it should be the core of our being, is not engaging. Third major theme, which we will get to later, is there's a big desire of interdepartmental collaboration on a smaller scale within GPSS. The first two themes really prompted this desire to reflect upon our being.
Maryclare Griffin (Statistics): So hearing you say these things and granted, I've been absent for awhile so this might have come up but I feel like it's informative to know that I stopped coming to these meetings after there was one where we literally read line by line on a long document and we argued over words for an hour and half. I understand this organization has to do that but it doesn't feel like my role was used most effectively.

Chris L: That's why we're here to work that out. As we move along and we go deeper into this sheet of paper, is that we think about this as a collective responsibility. Sorry, responsibility is not the right word. A collective exercise in a collective activity so it's not just the leadership saying we need to do this and this or you saying this to the leadership that you need to do this, this and this. It's saying we as a senate are going to make those changes but we're getting a little ahead of ourselves here.

Maryclare: I didn't mean to be antagonistic. Maybe that's also why some other people felt less engaged.

Chris L: Yes, this is a safe space. Thank you for being honest.

Leah Johnson (Oceanography): One thing that is missing from this first statement is when I come to GPSS, I also want to be informed and I want to know what's going on in campus and if there are existential crises to the graduate community. I'm not very good with the language but that might be good to include.

Chris L: I can tell you that this work that's reflected on this sheet of paper is going to continue and the opportunity for senate to be more involved will be more expansive.

Maggie (Public Health - Environmental & Occupational Health): Along the same lines, I would like this statement to reflect that when graduate students are representatives or are being represented as a whole, I would like this space to not only put out what happening in the committee but also gather feedback to represent the graduate student view.

Alan-Michael Weatherford (Comparative Literature): I was going to stay that the purpose of the organization and the mechanics and how that is operated and how we go through things line by line and at times, that's dull but I think it's important to remember how much power we do have as students and how we take that for granted or a lot of times are ignorant of it when we face the administration because a lot of times, they're a lot older and are familiar with the policies. I've been told many times from people from other universities that we have a lot of power that we don't use. I think GPSS is a huge collaborative, unified body that will allow us to do that. Many cases of maltreatment of graduate student are by professors. I've heard a lot of cases during my time here on campus and that is something I will not stand for so GPSS is something where I can say I won't tolerate maltreatment from administrative personnel while I'm here working my ass off.
Chris L: That's a great point. Talking to a lot of my counterparts in major research universities, we're really fortunate to be in a culture and climate where student government is taken seriously to a degree that a lot of places aren't so that's a really good thing. Any other reflections on that first part? If not, I would like to move on to the next layer of the cake. So to preface this, if we agree broadly, there's some part of wording that you'd like to add, if you agree that the senate is a space where we come and we articulate our common views, now the next question is what do we want that space to look like? In other words, when you walk in this door, what do you want this space to look like? What do you want to accomplish as a senator in order to achieve that goal for having the collaborative space that's important to us? This is both metaphorical and physical space. So discuss amongst yourselves and we'll come back again.

[Small group discussions]

Chris L: Okay, let's pause that too. So this next section, we'll go around again and hear what you've been talking about. Since we're going in steps, let's really focus on this aspect of the space of the senate itself. The next step, we'll talk about action item and concrete things. We'll get there. To the extent possible, let's try to focus on that middle step there.

Elisa Law (Secretary): We're talking about physical space now?

Chris L: The space of the senate in terms of physical but also in terms of the atmosphere and climate.

Elisa: In this group over here we talked about having tablespace instead of just the chairs and having something to work with. Then maybe having tablespace separated by the humanities and sciences with departments that are more likely to collaborate will be seated together. That would encourage more talk amongst each other.

Matthew Aghai (School of Environment): To further that thought, this discussion here was just to create a more professional setting so we're more than just an audience member than we are participants. We tend to be audience members when we sit in chairs like this. Whereas, in an auditorium, we have a place to put our notepad down with our laptop and actually engage.

Chris L: That's a good point. We're a little constrained with what we can do here but we can move to a totally different space. We were in Johnson a couple times in the fall. Anything else?

Thomas Edwards (Chemistry): We think that the heavy emphasis on parliamentary procedure is a big inhibition to open discussion in here so if you don't know the right magic words to say, you don't get to say that thing. What I've heard is in senate is they get told, "No, you can say those words." I know the purpose of using those procedures is to guide discussions and to keep us from going on wild tangents and I know that's valuable but I think we need to reign back on the emphasis on knowing the correct words to say things.
Devin Bedard (Earth & Space Sciences): I second that.

Jessica Snow (Rehabilitation Medicine): I really want to say as a newer senator, I think it's super intimidating to talk here for that reason because I can't speak appropriately.

Austin Wright-Pettibone (GPSS University Affairs Director): Can we poll that? How many people are afraid to speak or feel that they don't have the right words? Just by a show of hands.

Duru: I would like to add something to that though. I'm a second year senator. During my first year, I was self-conscious about saying stuff because I was worried that I didn't have the magic words. Coming here the second year, I cared less about that. I'm saying more of my thoughts. I would disagree that I've been turned away from saying certain things during meetings because I didn't have certain words. It's not like I wasn't heard.

Matthew: I'm a second year as well and I had the exact opposite experience.

Jessica: I have terminal masters so I will only be here for one year. It does make a difference to me and for me to maximize my experience here and feel like it mattered.

Patty Gauthier (History): I imagine there is a large turnover in the senate so you may have people that never speak.

Chris L: That's a good point. Let me comment very briefly on parliamentary procedure and its care and feeding. We use Alice Sturgess's rules of parliamentary procedure. Robert's rule is another common system. As you said, the fundamental principal is that it should be used in the service of giving everyone a fair chance so no one dominate the conversation. That's what we use it for so everyone has an equal opportunity to voice their opinion. Now it is byzantine. There are nuances. There are things that are not very intuitive about it. We don't do a very good job admittedly of teaching some of those nuances. We don't particularly know them that well ourselves. We know the bare essentials. I think it's useful in times when there's contentious debate and when order does really need to be kept when 10 people want to speak and they all need equal opportunity so one or two people don't dominate. At the same time, if anyone is feeling like parliamentary procedure is an obstacle in expressing yourselves, we're doing you a disservice and the thing that we should all keep in mind is communication and expressing yourself always takes priority over parliamentary procedure. Its main use is for whoever chairing the meeting if needed to make sure that people are not being silenced by virtue of other people dominating the conversation. That's its use. I understand that it seems to have a paradoxical effect. We should really look on that so thanks for bringing that up.

Christine Stawitz (Quantitative Ecology & Resource Management): One of the things that I brought up is that I agree with the women who spoke earlier on how it's really frustrating when the senate spends a long time thinking over a document. The times that I get excited to come to senate is when we're bringing up new idea and new departmental collaborations. I think it would
get me more interested and excited if senate was a place to get those collaborations started and not finish the things in the committees. The committees will be more interested in hashing out the details whereas we're more excited to bring new ideas.

Chris L: I absolutely agree.

Steve Carlin (Chemistry): I'm with that. I discussed about how a lot of the good work is done on the committees. There is a disconnect between the committees and what's happening and what's going on at the general meetings with the exception for Chris Erickson's political work and what he accomplishes. He does a good job on updating us. Other than that, we see what the committees are doing over their finished products and not as ongoing projects.

Duru: Just to add to that to the disconnect between GPSS and our constituents as well. I know we've had that issue before and other departments have that issue just with communication. People don't really read the emails so that's just to go along with that disconnect.

Chris L: Yes, anyone else?

Chris E: I just want to say that I love what people are saying here. I'll step down from my soapbox, kind of, but do be involved, especially for people who are first years. We are governed by these bylaws. I don't think the bylaws are really good for what our organization does. We talked about the resolution and how we go line by line. It's because it's slated out to be what we have to do. I would love for it to be more informal and have us just talk and only do parliamentary when we go through things but that's what the bylaws say. At some point, someone decided that would be best and not understanding that everyone is going to be new with new leadership next year. I want to encourage people to look at these ideas of how you can make changes to be better and not even think in the context of this year but as a long-term thing. What's best for anyone who takes on that job? Not just for me this year and what I think is great because my leadership style is different from someone else's. I think we talk about how we want these things but you wouldn't imagine how much I hear, even though I said I'm running and I want to do it differently, that this is what we did last year and that's what it needs to be. I think we need to get away from that. I think people are saying that but allow yourselves to do it.

Maren Haynes (Music): This is my second meeting and as someone just coming in and interested in being involved, I think part of the sit back and watch is just not knowing what’s going on and I'll be here for two quarters and that's it. It'd be nice to have some kind of mentoring program with veteran senators to at least get new senators up to speed.

Yasi Naraghi (Comparative Literature): I just want to note that going line by line, that's really exciting to me. I realize that some people find it tedious. I think if we could have a work space online for that and everyone logs in who is really interested in going through line by line and get together on the same time.
Chris L: So fortunately, Yasmeen, one of our senators, did exactly what Chris was saying. She said this doesn't make sense. She stepped up and introduced a bylaw change that allowed us to do most of the work in advance up to 48 hours before the meeting. So that's a really good example of looking at a procedure that doesn't make sense and isn't working for us and saying let's change it. Let's make it actually work for us and not against us. One theme that I'm hearing is that the information flow and issues flow from committees to senate is backwards and I absolutely agree and that been camped in a lot of meetings. One thing that we should really think about is reversing that so issues come to the senate. I have to credit Alma who had this brilliant idea of issues coming to the senate and the senate collectively decides as a body to assign it to a dedicated group of people who want to dig into it deeper and come back to report back to us. We inherited this committee structure from a restructuring that happened a couple years ago and we struggled to make it work. Without casting any negative shadows to previous officers or leadership, it was conceived in a backwards way. The senate should be the body assigning the work.

Elisa: I wanted to comment on the mentoring. When I became a senator for the first time, I felt exactly the same way. I don't know how to participate and I don't feel comfortable like the people who know what's going on. The senator who was with me made me feel comfortable, which was really helpful to just be able to ask “What are they talking about?” and have someone be able to tell me without raising my hand and asking in front of everyone, “What are we talking about?” So I second the mentoring idea.

Chris E: We’re over time.

Alice Popejoy (Public Health Genetics): Motion to extend discussion time by 15 minutes.

Douglass: Second.

Chris L: Thank you, are there any objections? Great, so have a couple more and move on to the next thing.

Alice: I wanted to say that I think the mentoring idea is a great idea for new people who don't know what's going on. That being said, there shouldn't be anything going on if you're sitting in your chair and actually listening that you would confused about. That's a problem with presentation and that's something that we'll talk about later in this discussion of if everything should be presented in the meeting so if it's your first time in a meeting, you should be able to be up to speed within the first minute of discussion and you should never feel lost.

Douglass: For a student organization I was a part of something that they do is coffee talks. For a few minutes before or after meetings, have people stick around and discuss more with people that are little more confused. The mentoring thing is a great idea but finding other ways and avenues to express themselves.
Colin: I wanted to throw out another informal poll because I heard people wanting more information and I heard from others that they want less information in senate meetings and more in an email format. I wanted to see where the whole body rested on that. So first, raise your hands if you want more information in the meetings so you would want to sit back and listen to a federal legislative update. Maybe if this is too big, we can talk about it later.

Chris L: Yes, we'll go back to this on the next part. Let's move on to the last part. On this sheet of paper, in terms of concrete things that we could achieve is from feedback directly from the focus groups. So feel free to discuss those and add some things in. But beyond suggestions which are still great, I think we would think most productive is to go to the question below this of what can we do collectively, as a body? Not as leadership or the senate but collectively everyone all together, the officers, senators, and executive senators. What can we do collectively to make this happen, to make these changes that we want to see happen? What are some steps we can make? Just real quickly, Doug on your coffee talk thing, everyone stick around afterwards because we’re having a reception after this meeting in the GPSS office with beverage stronger than coffee.

Genesis Gavino (Treasurer): And sandwiches.

Chris L: So let's move on to the final part of this. Again, suggestions on what can we do. Even better, how can we collectively make this happen?

[Small group discussion]

Chris L: Okay, let's pause there. Finish up what you're talking about. So now we're at the point of implementation. So let's get some feedback.

Devin: So we made this attempt a little while ago to better get to know your congress person. The different schools get to represent what we're doing which seems to vibe with what people are saying. I wouldn't say it's on fire but also we talked about this disconnect of the subcommittee to the actual senate itself. So in review of this information, we have this disconnect between subcommittees who are doing interesting and tangible things and this better get to know your school is maybe not the most popular thing. If people are struggling for an identify as to why we're sitting in this room, maybe if you can somehow intertwine the subcommittee's work that's actually pretty good work in most people's cases. I loved that music thing with T-Pain. That was from a subcommittee. That was awesome stuff. There's a lot of work on the subcommittees that no one knows about. I personally sit on a committee that listens to the College of the Environment. There's a lot of stuff going on. Their graduation gift is carbon footprint offset putting. That's kind of interesting stuff but I don't communicate that fact to the GPSS because I don't have a conduit. I guess I could talk to you but there's not so much of a conduit between the subcommittees who could be doing great tangible work and you have us attempt to how do we bring everyone together? Do we throw beer at them? Which would be great, by the way. Beer before the meeting would be great, but that's what I'm thinking. If we
could somehow fuse the better get to know your school with what the subcommittees are doing because I think people are genuinely interested and we wouldn’t be here if we weren’t.

Chris L: So what can we collectively commit to doing better bridge that gap?

Devin: Subcommittees talk. Not at length.

Elisa: Subcommittees can get on the Spotlight part of the meeting and give a little report of what you’ve been doing at any time. We would love to have you. That’s an option.

Chris L: The spot is not limited to departments. That was one thought we had.

Patty: One thing we were talking about in our group was at every meeting, maybe have 15 minutes where the committees can meet and talk for people who can’t meet at the meeting time. There can be a little bit of a report that’s ongoing and bring up what you’re doing.

Karen: We talked about in this discussion and previously in our group about accessibility and it kind of goes with what Alice was saying. Specifically, I have very little background in legislative updates and I don’t know what passed in Senate meeting and what’s good or bad. House bill 37.2 means nothing to me. Nothing against you. That’s my weakness. I was thinking if it was more accessible in the content, then it would be more interesting because I can actually say this is how it affects me and my constituents rather than okay.

Maggie: On the same lines that was mentioned was in some legislative stuff you get if this is passed this is what this means. If this is not passed this is what that means. It’d be nice if for some of the broader things, we had that and say what are the actual implications of this.

Douglass: I think context is important. I came into this as a first year senator. We had the first day thing where we got the brief outline but it would be nice to have more like context of what things meant and what different committees do and examples of what past projects were done before. Things like that that would get people interested in these things instead of falling into everything and learning as you go.

Jesse: We have two suggestions. One would be that the emails and the information that’s disseminated outside senate meetings could have more prompting and steering to it. Sort of a sense of here’s what you can do with this information and here’s what we would like you to do with this information and bring certain things to the meetings. The other is along the lines of the mentoring suggestion from before. Having new senator meetings on a more regular basis. I heard there was one last quarter but people are jumping in frequently during the year.

Chris L: You’re right. We operate on a cycle where people are coming and going throughout the year.

Thomas: An idea to help with the actual collaboration and fostering collaboration within
departments that goes beyond the senate and the senate members is maybe make a semi-public or private Wiki where we can add information about what people in departments are doing and what they’re good at. This might be more helpful more for scientists than others but an example is Lab X in my department has really good mass spec skills. If you want really good mass spectrum, you can go talk to these guys or we’re really good at this technique. You can either search techniques or topics or ideas and see what comes up on campus.

Carolyn Shores (Environmental and Forest Sciences): An idea we came up that could address the goal of having action items accomplished in senate meetings is breaking out in smaller discussion groups. I think these smaller discussion groups really help to facilitate ideas, flow of information and really helps with coming up with ways to solve problems instead of it just being a quiet room where it’s like “Raise your hand and say what you think”, but if there’s five minutes of discussion beforehand and sharing out to the rest of the senate what your smaller group came up with, I think that would help towards accomplishing things.

Alan-Michael: Two things. One to bridge off the dissemination of emails, I think it would be very helpful to have them directed to certain schools or parties. So if we had constituent-directed email we can just forward it on.

Elisa: So recently we noticed, because of some feedback we’ve been receiving, we tried to change the constituent emails to have a table of contents and be divided by action and opportunity and events and be able to be easily copy and pasted and forwarded on. I would love to get your ideas on whether that’s the best way to format it put it on a Google Doc that you can attach to your constituents. What’s the best way to do this? I assume that not all information is information that you would think is appropriate to pass on to your constituents.

Chris L: Let’s do one or two more since we have other things we need to get to. This has been fantastic. How are the groups working out by the way?

[General favoring of small groups]

Edward: Someone brought up the idea of mentorship by older senate members. It’s hard to tell who is older senate members especially if you haven’t been in the senate so we were thinking of having color coded name tags. So the graduate students, it’s my fourth year, and they’re willing to be approached by new senators will have a different color name tag. This will be a way to widen that choke point with the officers. We can’t shove off all the change to officers. There’s only a limited amount of time they have to do all the changes.

Alex Bolton (Law): Discussed a little bit earlier was an idea to take this from the senate and send to a smaller group into an ad hoc committee to put all these ideas together to report back to the senate either by the first or second meeting next quarter to test run these ideas and effect some of these changes.
Chris L: I think that’s a fantastic idea. Maybe not the first or second meeting of the quarter but an ongoing process which reports back.

Alex: Sure, have the first report by that time just to make sure there’s some concrete things.

Chris E: This is one of those things we talked about in our group was this idea of not making it clear what our expectations are for senators. That’s on us whether that’s training or all these things. A lot of the times, this is a place where you got elected or someone brought it up so you get to come here to get this information that’s top secret. People are here to serve your constituents and your departments. Are people reading emails? It’s in this thing where do we get more people involved if you’re doing important work? But we have this expectation of a deadline to meet? Maybe that’s more effective for the senate to give an officer or a committee work and say we want you back within three weeks to give us that and you can make judgements and say why didn’t this happen? Are we moving forward? Especially along the lines of is it too much to ask for people to meet sometime next quarter and give us some ideas to throw around and we can take it from there? I think those are good questions for everyone to think about.

Chris L: So on that note, I’ll entertain a motion for the senate to authorize a creation of an ad hoc committee to carry this work forward to spring quarter.

Alex: So moved.

Douglass: Second.

Chris L: Any objections? Then the committee is created. You’ll notice the last things I put on this is what we do collectively and that’s what we just talked about. Now, what we can we commit to individually? I would say one way to make an individual commitment to achieving these things is to serve on this committee but there are other ways to do it too. If you would like to continue this work and actually implement the things we talked about so we didn’t just sit here for over an hour to just talk about it. We sat here to get ideas that we want to see happen. If you want to help us do that, talk to us after the meeting. For the moment, I would like to move on but I would just like to say that you were probably expecting a speech for the state of GPSS. This is the state of GPSS. You are the state of GPSS. What we just did was the state of GPSS. Please give yourselves a round of applause. So we temporarily tabled the federal legislative agenda so we’ll return to that item right now.

**Approval of Federal Legislative Agenda:**

Chris E: So one of these things that we talked about. We like to go through these things line by line. It was actually here the whole time. Two weeks ago, we sent something out and said here’s this. If you ever sent an email out and said you were going to put an attachment on it and didn’t do it, how many people get back to you just to tell you that there’s nothing on there? Man,
we didn’t get any. Then, we went through a whole process just to find out that nobody got the document so that was awesome for everyone. So we sent it out and another week goes by and I heard nothing from anybody. So I’m working off the idea that this is awesome and we’ve all seen it and we’ve all read it and we’re all ready to go ahead and pass it. Am I right in that or shall we open it up for debate?

Edward: I move we pass it.

Colin: Second.

**GPSS Communications Activity:**

Chris L: Any objections? So in conjunction with the conversation we were having of specifically the email format. Alice very generously agreed to facilitate a discussion specifically on that. I’ll leave this up to you. Do you want to take some time now to do that or do you want to tackle at another time?

Gary Hothi (Social Work): I think it’s important but I think we’re doing elections today. If we can somehow get to the elections. I don’t know. I want to hear what we all have to say about emails.

Chris L: It’s specifically about emails.

Alice: Maybe we can just take some quick polls?

Chris L: Sure.

Alice: So the idea is because we don’t know, like someone in my group said she doesn’t feel like she gets GPSS emails. Does everyone get GPSS emails from Elisa? Raise your hand if you don’t. The idea was to have a specific conversation about communication from the officers to GPSS as a whole. We were going to talk about responsibilities and we kind of went into that and we talked about this in exec and one thing that we said is a definitive this is your responsibility as a senator is to get information out to your constituents. Also, if the information isn’t disseminated effectively and isn’t easily facilitated for you to do that, then there is a disconnect there with the expectations with what you expect from the officers and all that. Our questions were about the format and the timing that you would get the emails and with the committees, they can poll from the senate more formally. Just in general just so we have something to go off of, is it better for things in separate emails that you can forward or all in one? Who says separate? All in one? So this is the work of the committee to do this. Maybe that means we have one email that you can forward and extra ones that will clutter your inbox but also the method to get your feedback from your constituents. How are you doing that? Out of curiosity, do you get emails from your constituents? Raise your hand if yes. So that’s something to think about is how you engage with your constituents and GPSS’s role in helping you do that versus just putting it all on you and saying send your emails to your constituents and not really having GPSS as a format. Day of
the week was another thing we talked about. Maybe just keeping it to weekends versus weekdays. Is everyone okay with emails on the weekends? If yes, raise your hand. And definitely not? And beginning of the week or end of week. Beginning of the week? End of the week better? That’s good information to have. We can keep it at that and we’ll work on that specifically for what works best with everyone.

Elisa: On that note, what I mentioned about changing the format of the email and the table of context. Did you guys notice that? Is it easier? Raise your hand if it’s better and it’s awesome and you love me?

Chris L: Before we move on, in ASUW, they use clickers and when someone votes, their name and how they vote shows up on the screen. These informal straw polls are a lot better I think. So next up is Colin, our illustrious chair of the Finance and Budget committee, who’s quickly going to tell us about some organizations we’ve funded.

**F&B Committee: Funded Organizations**

Colin: And a little bit of what we’re doing since so many are so curious. I didn’t want to go into too much detail about what we’re doing but we give money to two different types of groups: RSOs, which are student organizations and departments which you all represent. Most of our special allocations is to the RSOs. We’re at 34%. That’s normal for this time of year. There are a ton of events in the spring and people try to get money early on. We funded over 18 applications as of yesterday. We’ve done some cool things. This was a black history month poetry slam on the left and this was a departmental retreat at Friday Harbor Labs. They are even dressed up in interesting outfits. As you can tell, we have a ton of departmental money left even though there’s not that much of it. That’s on all of you so please talk to your constituents and we have a ton of money and we just want to give it away. I don’t think we’ve turned anyone down to people we could legally give money to. We’ll give you refrigerators and karaoke machines. I think the medical school got an xBox and they had a good reason for it. You can come to the meetings and find out. We have space on the committees. What we want, two things from you. Like I said, apply for departmental allocations. Everything you need to know is on the GPSS website. You can come talk to me or anyone else on the committee and Genesis, our treasurer. What we really want is feedback of these events. So if you go to events and if they’re funded by GPSS, they should tell you. We want to hear about it. We’re trying ourselves to go but there’s only five of us on the committee. I know this is small. There’s a ton of them. We’re going to them on the GPSS events calendar so you have more information on what they actually are and when they are. This is just pulled from the application so not everything is finalized at that point. There’s a ton of cool stuff going on campus. I think they give a lot of advertising focus to the undergrads but cool perk. If you go as the official GPSS Finance and Budget representative, you get to go for free. Even if they’re charging you for money, you can go for free.

Genesis: You have to sign up in advance.
Colin: Yes, we can’t all go for free. Only one person gets to go so you’ll have to communicate with us on that. There are some cool stuff coming up. A couple of culture nights, a Polynesian Day, a night market, there’s a musical, some dances, a carnival, an improved music project with jazz. That sounds pretty cool if you’re into that sort of thing. I like T-Pain personally.

Chris E: One of the questions on the application is has your department been funded in the last four years. Does that disqualify you and if so, is there a way so people can find out if they’ve been funded?

Colin: It doesn’t disqualify you. Usually if you can’t find out if you’re departments been funded, we have records going back at least a year and we usually consider that as not funded and actually we don’t discredit you. We actually want to give you more money if you applied last you to help you buy capital items for your lounge, a new couch and those kinds of things. We will actually give you double the recommended amount if you haven’t been funded recently so that’s something to keep you in mind. Last point real quick, we’re going through and reworking our funding guidelines. I put this up here as solely a teaser because we’re actually going to come back and get your feedback on it in a couple of weeks, one of the ending meetings at the end of the year. On the left is how we’re doing it now and on the right is how we want to brainstorm and talk about it. So we have a couple ideas ourselves but there’s only five of us and a lot of you and we don’t represent all the the different sizes and types of departments. We’ll write all this down in an email but please start thinking about it so we can have a discussion. Questions?

Karen: Can you add a why were doing this?

Colin: So there’s a lot of different departments that are teeny-tiny small and there are two departments that are this big so we just feel like this is not adequately spreading all this money out to the departments. A ton of departments are stuck with only a small amount of money and we want to make it more equitable.

Steve: Point of clarification, is this all students or graduate students only?

Colin: Graduate students only.

Chris E: Plus PhD.

Colin: Graduate and professional students. Full time or part time or anyone that’s not enrolled as an undergrad. Any other questions? Thank you for your time.

Executive Senator Election:

Chris L: So as we said last week, we are going to elect an executive senator this week. So we have one candidate that put his name forward and we’ll give him a chance to talk in a second. I’m sorry, we have two candidates who put their names forward but I do want to open up
nominations from the floor. Hearing none, we'll hear from our two candidates. So we have Doug and Alan-Michael. So which one wants to go first? We'll give Doug two minutes and then we'll open it up for questions for two to three minutes and then we'll give the floor to Alan-Michael.

Douglass: Good evening everyone. I’m Douglass Taber and I go to the Evans School of Public Administration and I’m running for the position of executive senator. This is my first year as a senator at GPSS and I’m a first year at the Evans School as well. I came from the Evans School from UC Davis where I had a degree in political science and the Evans School is the only school I applied to because it’s what I wanted to do, public administration. It’s the number 4 school for non-profits management. This is what I want to do: representing people, finding ways to basically, I’m trying not to use buzzwords like stakeholders and stuff, but basically help people utilize and realize the power they have and better provide a voice for that. That’s what I came here to do and I see this as an opportunity to do that for my fellow graduate students. So I think that’s really valuable and I’m really excited to serve the graduate school in that capacity. It’s something that I’m really passionate about. I’m very active in committees. I’m active on five committees in GPSS and in the Evans School student organizations and I enjoy doing it. That’s all I can say about that.

Chris L: Thank you Doug. Now, questions for Doug.

Alma: Are you a master’s student?

Douglass: Yes, I’m a master’s student.

Alma: And what are the committees you’re on?

Douglass: I’m on the state legislative committee, the federal legislative committee, and I’ve participated in the science steering committee, finance & budget committee and travel grants committee.

Chris L: Any other questions for Doug?

Alma: Can you tell us about your definition of diversity?

Douglass: This is funny because we had a great quiz section from my 512 class. We had a discussion on diversity. It can be anything. It’s really hard to pin one thing on diversity. Going really meta and then going really small, is it important to have diversity where you’re having people that are intolerant of diversity? Is it important to have those people? Is it important to have people that don’t want diversity? And then you have people that love diversity and cultures and languages and gender and all those things. Then in a smaller definition, I would say having an eclectic variety of different cultures, languages and perspectives. It’s hard not to be too broad about something that means broad so that’s what I have for that.
Alma: Thank you.

(English): Is there anything special you would like to pursue once you become an executive senator?

Douglass: Making myself more available to people outside the senate. So providing my personal contact information and if people have any ideas, since sometimes you have ideas and you forgot about them and you don’t want to hang on to them until next week’s meeting, so just being available and having people be more comfortable contacting me. I eat lunch everyday at the same place. Just putting that out there. I’m at the tram every Tuesday and Thursday. I’m usually by myself or with random people. So making myself available and being a conduit for people to use to get to the executive committee and express their concerns and issues.


Alan-Michael: Hi, my name is Alan-Michael Weatherford. I’m from the department of Comparative Literature. I’ve done quite a bit. This is my 2nd year as a senator. I’m moving into my PhD program so I’ll be staying here. I’ve debated sitting on committee very heavily because I’m very into my work and will be writing my master’s thesis next quarter. Nevertheless, I still find myself doing a lot. I only sit on one committee and my heart is very dedicated to that committee and that is the diversity committee. I host occasionally a few workshops that we do and they’re very educationally focused and I’m always in the business of raising consciousness and making sure people really back up their words and what they claim to do so they actually know what they are trying to say. So, I was approached by Alice Popejoy to come and sit on this committee so I think if I do sit on it, I will work very hard on. I see Chris in many things. Since the beginning, I’ve always been popping up in different events and different things. Grad school life has been very important to me. I spend more time here than anywhere on campus and I’ve encountered a few experiences here with certain professors and faculty that I have not liked so this is my means through which I make grad school life a lot better for all of us.

Chris L: Questions for Alan-Michael?

Carolyn: How do you see yourself addressing these problems between grad students and professors? What do you see yourself doing?

Alan-Michael: I see myself going through the right people and knowing how to talk to them. I had an issue a recently appointed faculty member who was appointed right out of, he was ADD. There was a lot of power dynamic in the classroom and not fair grading practices. I had to go through certain channels to make sure certain things were taken care of and we were recompensated for what would have occurred in that class and so that was just talking to the right people and getting the right people to talk to other people and that’s how it worked. Steve: Who are these people that you speak and how would being an executive senator better enable you to access these channels?
Alan-Michael: One of which is Leroy Searle. He is a very predominant figure in the Comparative Literature department and he’s been around for years. He also knows many of the deans. I sat on the search committee for one of the deans that we recently appointed for the Arts and Sciences and having one on one based contact with him and having Leroy Searle, he is always a door opener. So sitting on the executive committee is really knowing all these people and making these connections and saying “Hey, I know Chris. He's from the GPSS. I also knew Leroy Searle” and these people lead you to other people and it’s about following up with those people both that get things done. People are people. They have friends. They work with each other.

Chris L: Other questions for Alan-Michael?

Odessa Benson (Social Work): What are your thoughts about your role in the diversity committee and talking earlier about GPSS?

Alan-Michael: So the diversity committee is actually trying to branch out. That’s one of our big goals, connecting with other groups and other committees. A future hope of our is to continue working with other committees on specific things to make sure that diversity notions are brought up. I’m using ambiguous language because that takes up so many forms in different ways. One thing that I’m about to propose is actually getting Hall Health to consider men’s sexual health because it is non-existent. I went there the other day and the lady said it's because nobody has made enough of a fuss about it and it’s one of the greatest misfortunes of this world and for example, the diversity committee and anyone interested in public health can gather to make this happen and have Hall Health address men’s sexual issues. That might include researching any sexual stigmas that might go along in campus so that’s one example that I can speak to now.

Chris L: Any other questions for Alan-Michael? Thank you. So now, I believe Elisa distributed to you strips of paper, which you will write the name of your preferred candidate. Both names are up there and she will collect and count them.

Edward: I just want to clarify, do we put our names on these because I know that for the general elections, we do and they’re not secret ballots.

Chris L: Yes, please put your name and the name of the candidate. Is that it? So next up we have the legislative update. So Chris, take it away.

Legislative Update:

Chris E: So there’s this whole lobbyist trick where you say, “I’m going to be really brief” and talk entirely too long. I’m not going to do that. This is going to be short. So last year, if you were here, we did elections and I said, “If you elect me, I will pass House bill 1669 that protects the fee-based program.” I might not have passed it specifically because I’m not in the legislature but
we got it done 6 days ahead of time. On that, I'm going to save it all and the end of session is tomorrow and we’ll hopefully come back next meeting and do a nice wrap-up but again, if you have any questions or you want to expand on this, get a hold of me. I’m free and I will get back to you. It might be one in the morning. Trust me, I’m crazy like that. But if you have any questions, I can tell you all about these crazy stuff. Thank you.

Elections Committee Update:

Chris L: Thanks Chris. Next up, we have the elections committee who will be represented by Eddie Schwieterman who will be telling us about officer elections.

Edward: So the elections committee consists of Seyda Ipek, who couldn’t be here, me, Dawn and Julia. Are Dawn and Julia here? Julia’s here. Please if you have any questions beyond this short presentation, please ask one of us or send an email to Seyda. So elections are important. This is when we’re going to elect all the officers for next year: the president, the vice president, treasurer and secretary. The important dates are April 8th. That's the last day to get in all your nominating paperwork to get your information to the website. Now, you can always run from the floor on the election day which is April 23rd. So those are really important dates. Another important date is April 20th. Senators will get absentee ballots by email. If you can’t make that meeting on April 23rd, you can fill out your choice by email and send that in. Moving back, this is a really great reason why if you want to run to be an officer, it really pays to get your nominating paperwork by April 8th. Otherwise, people who are voting absentee won’t see your name if you’re running from the floor on April 23rd. The most important document you can look at if you’re planning to run for one of the positions is the elections packet that is posted on the GPSS website. Unfortunately, Seyda made some slides which had the URL for that but it's really easy to find on the main website. If you go there, there’s an elections packet. It has descriptions and responsibilities of the officers. Officially, you’re required to work 19.5 hours per week. You can ask the officers if that’s true. Another important requirement is that you attend at least 3 senate meetings if you’re going to run as an officer. So regular general senate meetings count, committee meetings count and I believe in the elections packet, there is a list of examples of committees and subcommittees that count towards that. So everyone, get those important dates: April 8th, 20th and 23rd. If there’s a challenge to the election, that needs to happen by April 25th. Anything else?

Elisa: There will be information that we will send out to your constituents in an email tonight because you don’t have to be senator to run but you do have to attend three meetings.

Edward: If you've already been to three meetings, then you’re good. Does anyone have any questions? So I encourage anyone to have the drive and the desire to file and run and good luck.

Chris L: Thanks Eddie. And most importantly, talk to the officers. We have been living this life all year and we can tell you for a long time what it’s like. So next order of business is announcements.
Elisa: One second, I’ll write Seyda’s contact email. She’s the chair of the elections committee so if you have any questions.

Announcements & Adjourn:

Chris L: Are there any announcements?

Lily Campbell (English): So I’m Lily Campbell and I’m from the department of English. I’m just going to pass around flyers but I’m on the committee for the Odegaard Writing Center for graduate support. We’re piloting a dissertation writing retreat that’s happening during the interim of spring and summer quarter. So mostly I just wanted you to tell your departments about it. So here are some flyers with the information but I can send you the internet version to distribute too if you email me. This committee is all about how we can support graduate writing on campus so if you have ideas of things you want to put up there in your departments and support graduate student writers. The more piloting programs we have, the more funding we can do where there’s interest so let me and my committee know and we really like to help you write. So just a few more details of the retreat. It’ll be 5 days, 9am-4pm and it’s mostly concentrated writing time and workshops with professors with backgrounds in writing and concentrated time with tutors. I’m happy to talk more if there are any other questions.

Chris L: Any other announcements?

Chris E: I’m just going to say real quick on this idea of elections, so maybe not only meet with the officer you want to be but meet with all of them and we’ll connect you to the student regent and chairs of committees that you might be overseeing in that spot and the executive senators. Talk to everyone because we all have a different opinion and I think you’re going to get more of a feel for the position by talking to everybody rather than just one person and especially do run. If you don’t like something that you want to do different, that works sometimes.

Rachel (ASUW Senate Liaison): My name’s Rachel and I’m the ASUW Senate Liaison and a lot of people were talking about how you want to get your voice out and make your opinion heard and I just want to let you know that while GPSS serves only graduate and professional students, ASUW does serve all students and the senate meetings are exclusively legislation of opinions. So if there is something that you noticed on campus that you want to have student opinion clarified, feel free to come talk to me. Kevin Shotwell is the GPSS liaison to senate so go talk to him or you can submit online on your own. You can just google ASUW senate. That legislation can be pushed through. It effectively is the opinion of all students. We recently passed a resolution in support of HB 1669 and group on a whole are open to any issues and not just ones that are affecting undergrads.

Elisa: Super last minute. I did send an email about it on Monday but the diversity committee is having their last forum for the quarter about disability. It’ll be led by the Seattle Commission for People of Disabilities. It’s tomorrow so if I get your email tonight, which I will, please forward this
information on and just share the facebook event page. I didn't print very many posters out but if you’re going to put it up, feel free to take one. So it's tomorrow in the HUB, 12:30-1:30.

Chris L: Is lunch provided?

Elisa: Light refreshments are provided, Chris.

Gary: The Seattle Forum is hosting a graduate student happy hour at the Burke. That’s March 21st, Friday 8pm. Yasmeen has posted that on the GPSS Facebook page. So it’s a graduate student happy hour on March 21st from 8:30 and there’s a word challenge connected to it.

Alice: In Science & Policy, we just set the date for our spring summit, the Science & Policy summit which is our big event. The theme is quality of life and we’re approaching it from a bunch of different science and policy perspectives. We’re doing a call for speakers right now and since we only have a limited number of people on our committee, I want to put it out here that if you have any ideas of people that would be good speakers on certain topics, send us an email. They are neuroscience and mental health, specifically stress and how that affects quality of life, robotics and cyber-physical interactions, like how computers interact with people and how that changes our lives and the third one is energy specific and changes to US policy of fuel emissions. If you have any contacts of people, resources, labs, researchers, policy people, anyone with expertise on this, please reach out to one of us or email me. It’s popejoy@uw.edu. It’s May 15th in the Burke. There’s going to be a happy hour and speaker in the afternoon. We’ll advertise that.

Chris L: Any other announcements? I have three. First one is the ad hoc committee. Again, if you are interested in the work that we did today, please talk to any of the officers or any of the executive committee members. Please do consider it. We’ve been doing it with a small group of people that we’ve selected in a very compressed time frame and now we want to blow this wide open and get as many voices on the table. The second announcement is that your new executive senator will be Alan-Michael Weatherford. Thanks for both of you for running. The third announcement is please join us upstairs for refreshments, sandwiches and conversations. The fourth announcement is to end the quarter on a slightly personal note, the state of GPSS is something I’ve had kicking around in my mind since November. I felt like it was important for us to reflect collectively on what this organization is and talking about elections bring me back to running for this position last year. I ran for this position because for me, the Graduate and Professional Student Senate is the only institution on this campus that provides a forum for all graduate and professional students to come together no matter their department, no matter what their interest, no matter what their academic area of study, to come together to get our voice heard in a robust way. And given the climate that we’re given politically and economically, it’s never been more important than now to articulate what we do in graduate and professional schools and why we’re getting these degrees and what our value in society is. So the work that you’ve done today make me immensely proud to be standing here and I couldn’t be more happy of where we are right now and the state of GPSS is strong. I’ll now entertain a motion to adjourn.
Alex: So moved.

Edward: Second.