



## MEMORANDUM

To: GPSS Senate  
From: Lindsay Alane Morse, GPSS Secretary  
Date: May 24, 2010  
RE: 2009-10 GPSS Secretary Final Report

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### **Document and Information Management**

One of the most important duties of the GPSS Secretary is to manage all official organization documents. I came in to find much of the records management in disarray, with several documents missing, out of place, or never formally approved. A fair amount of time was spent locating these documents, especially from the past few years—some of which had to be retyped, as they could not be located in electronic format—organizing them, converting them to the more secure PDF format and uploading them to the GPSS website.

I worked closely with the summer GPSS Web Developer, Executive Senator Trond Nilsen, to completely revamp the organization's website. Our revamping included the creation of several new blogs, with RSS feeds, document archives, and easier editing available to all staff and officers. Trond used a third party platform to ensure ease of future development of the site. Very few sections of the site, most notably the committee page, had to be custom built. I also replaced the GPSS group on Facebook with a page, which was preferred since it allowed updates to show up in fans' news feeds. I linked the new page with a Twitter account that I started for GPSS. Finally, I linked the gpsscalendar Google account with Picasa, so that multiple people could upload to a single web album for the entire organization.

At the suggestion of GPSS President Jake Faleschini, I designed a new monthly newsletter for GPSS, in part to help provide greater transparency. The newsletter has allowed each of the officers to provide monthly reports on their projects to the Senate and has provided a forum for Senators, Executive Senators, the Student Regent, and the GPSS representatives on University Committees to give updates on their work. This year reports were provided by the University Bookstore Board of Trustees, the Student Insurance Review Committee, the Provost's new 2Y2D Committees, the University Transportation Committee, the Student Regent Selection Committee, and the Student Publications Board. All newsletters have been archived in PDF format on the GPSS website.

Last year a committee of GPSS representatives, with some input from ASUW representatives, worked on redesigning the GPSS Guide to Life. For the first time, with the help of President Faleschini, a partnership was made with the Not for Tourists guidebook company to publish the GPSS Guide as a special introductory section of the Not for Tourists Seattle Edition, with a purple cover, now published as the Seattle – UW Edition. We marketed the guides to graduate departments and the bookstore and were able to sell 934 copies (at cost: \$10/copy). This is an area that will need to be worked on next year, but due to the late delivery of the first copies in September, just before the beginning of the new school year, advertising of the new book was more difficult. The Guide to Life committee will likely need to be reformed, in order to plan revisions to the guide.

GPSS passed 9 resolutions this year:

- 09.09-10 – RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING PRESIDENT EMMERT FOR HIS SERVICE
- 08.09-10 - RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A STUDENT-RUN FOOD COOPERATIVE
- 07.09-10 - RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF EXPANDING COMPOSTING ON THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CAMPUS
- 06.08-09 - RESOLUTION TO NAME THE HUB SENATE CHAMBER
- 05.08-09 - RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF UAW LOCAL 4121 BARGAINING EFFORTS
- 04.08-09 - RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE CREATION OF THE CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY FUND
- 03.08-09 - MEMORIAL RESOLUTION FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI
- 02.08-09 - RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF AFFORDABLE TEXTBOOKS
- 01.09-10 - RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE HUSKY PRINCIPLES

### **Senate Membership and Meeting Attendance**

We had 135 individual Senators serving in GPSS this year, from a wide variety of programs and departments. The four GPSS officers attended 59 separate departmental orientations at the beginning of the school year, and were able to recruit several new graduate students as Senators. I reached out to some departmental student organizations to help with Senator recruitment for underrepresented departments, including the newly formed group in the School of Education, but without success. I also created a new page on our website listing all programs with open seats, and emailed the list to GPAs asking for help in recruiting representatives for their departments, but, again, without any real success. There is definitely room for improvement in Senator recruitment in specific programs; we have had notable difficulty in recruiting—and retaining—Senators in the professional programs, including Medicine and Dentistry. The Business School and School of Education seats had previously been split into seats for specific programs, many of which remain unfilled. There has been notable difficulty for the Jackson School Senators, which were also split into individual program seats just last year, in meeting our attendance requirement. GPSS may wish to reconsider this splitting of seats.

Attendance this year has been much healthier than last. Last year there was consistently difficulty in obtaining quorum at our meetings and meeting start times were often (slightly) delayed as a result. This year we have had an average of 67 Senators, over twice the amount required for quorum, at our meetings. One meeting was even attended by 90 of our Senators. The lowest meeting attendance occurred with 59 Senators at our Officer Elections meeting. Part of this success is probably attributable to the new attendance requirement, approved by the Senate early in the year, to increase the requirement from one meeting per quarter to two. A large number of Senators, however, have attended almost all, if not all, of the meetings, suggesting that the content and format of the Senate this year has also helped in increasing meeting attendance.

## **Judicial Committee (and Ad-hoc Committees)**

The GPSS Judicial Committee met once over the summer months in order to consider a number of bylaw amendments, recommended by last year's GPSS Vice President Dave Iseminger. Most of those amendments were approved by Judicial, and then by the full Senate during the school year. The most extensive amendments, including a constitutional amendment, involved the creation of a formal complaint and investigation process. The Judicial Committee had four other meetings during the year. They considered a draft of the Bill of Rights, recommended the creation of the Dispute Resolution Advisory Committee, both of which will be discussed in a moment, and recommended an amendment to the bylaws covering the Finance and Budgeting Committee, allowing all decisions of F&B to be appealed to the Executive Committee.

GPSS worked to create a new standing committee, the Dispute Resolution Advisory Committee (DRAC), in order to aid graduate and professional students who are in disputes with other members of the University community. The GPSS Secretary will coordinate the new committee and will also act as a liaison with the University Ombudsman's office. We will ask several Senators to be available, on an on-call basis, each year to act as process advocates for students in need of the various campus resources and, if asked, to sit in on formal proceedings as a neutral observer. These Senators will be expected to report back to GPSS as to the needs of students and as to the currently available resources. In addition to the new committee, we also set up a resource guide with a directory for students who are looking for various offices to help guide them through the dispute process. I chaired the ad-hoc committee that was asked to look into the issue and my publications assistant and I were responsible for compiling and formatting the new guide.

The first draft of the Bill of Rights was drafted last year by GPSS President Jake Faleschini and GPSS Policy Analyst Kelly Merrick. The Bill of Rights was brought back this year and GPSS created a working group to edit the current draft. The working group had two meetings and then worked together in editing the document online. The Bill of Rights was then provided to the Executive Committee, to give the Executive Senators and opportunity to make suggestions and is expected to be sent by the full Senate to the Faculty Senate for approval. This is an ongoing project, and requires the follow-up of next year's officers in order for success.

I discovered, upon reading through the bylaws shortly after taking office, that GPSS internal committee appointment had not strictly followed the bylaws for the past several years. I ensured that the formal process was followed this year and would urge all future Secretaries to closely read—and follow—all organizational rules, as they are necessary in guaranteeing fair and consistent policy. Upon reading the bylaws for the Student Technology Fee Committee, I was also able to discover inconsistencies in their responsibilities, specifically in the requirement that they send quarterly reports to GPSS (and ASUW). The last report had been sent in 2003. I immediately requested a report from the current STF Committee Chair and Coordinator. Upon receiving the report, ASUW and GPSS set up a joint task force, which will continue to meet over the summer and will be expected to present findings and recommendations to both student government groups early next school year.

## **ASUW**

The GPSS Secretary is the official liaison with the Associated Students of the University of Washington (ASUW). In my role I sat on the ASUW Board of Directors as a representative for GPSS. I attended all but a few of their weekly board meetings, voting and speaking on behalf of graduate and professional students on campus. I believe that I made some great strides in further developing the relationship between GPSS and ASUW, which is incredibly important, and expect this to be a continued focus for my successors.

I also sat on the ASUW Student Senate Steering Committee and was able to provide input on their agenda items and be given weekly updates on the work of their Student Senate. This was a particularly valuable experience for me, as this year we were able to fill our two seats in the ASUW Student Senate with GPSS representatives and I was not required to fill that role as well.

In my service on the ASUW Board and other committees, I never lost sight of the fact that I was a representative of GPSS to ASUW and not a representative of ASUW itself. I was also diligent lest I approach my position of liaison from too much of an outsider's perspective. These past two years, in my work with ASUW, I have discovered a real need to ensure that ASUW understands the important role of GPSS in student government on campus—and of graduate and professional students as fellow students. More work must necessarily be done in this area each year, in part due to the high turnover of participants in student government. This year was a year of all new ASUW Board members, which, I think, increased that need. Next year will have several current Board members and other ASUW leadership returning in new positions, which should help ease this.

### **Diversity Efforts and Service**

I served as a member of the Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program (GO-MAP) Advisory Board throughout the year, attending each of their quarterly meetings and offering the support of GPSS in furthering their important mission. I also presented on GPSS projects and opportunities to GO-MAP students at a number of their social functions each quarter, including their prospective student days, which provided a chance to reach out to potential future graduate students. Next year is the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of GO-MAP and the incoming Secretary will be expected to continue to serve on their advisory board, and to provide input and service in planning their various events. One event that stands out for potential for collaboration is their future Graduate Student Showcase. This year the UW Graduate School cancelled their annual GPE week event. GPSS has \$3000 set aside in the Secretary's fund in order to assist with this event. Next year, if GPE week is once again cancelled, I would recommend seeing if these funds could be used to support the Graduate Student Showcase instead. This year the bulk of the money will go into our General Fund, as it was unspent. \$323.22 of it was transferred to the Diversity Fund.

The GPSS Secretary serves as an ex-officio member of the ASUW Joint Commissions Committee (JCC) and Student Advisory Board (SAB), operating in the Ethnic Cultural Center (ECC), under Vice Provost Lange. SAB was in the process of restructuring itself this year, so I was not given the opportunity, as an ex-officio member to work with them, unfortunately. They will be having their general meetings once again next year, and since the ECC and GPSS will both be housed in Condon Hall during the redesign of their respective buildings, providing us with an excellent chance for greater collaboration. I was able to work with JCC throughout the year and hope that future Secretaries will continue to work closely with this important group.

The GPSS Diversity Fund, totaling \$4323.22 over the entire year, was used to support 13 different campus groups and their events:

- ASUW GBLTC - Ellis Concert
- Playing French Seattle - Theater Festival
- ASUW JCC - Regent Harrell Event
- ASUW JCC - Diversity through Photography
- UW Hillel - Rabbi Greenberg Event

- First Nations @ UW - Spring Pow Wow
- Women of Color Collective - Dialoguing Difference Conference
- Women Who Rock Collective - talk series
- ASUW ASC/PISC - Bite of Asia
- FIUTS - Global Gala
- QCenter - Lavender Graduation

I was the team leader representing GPSS at the MLK Jr. Day of Service. This event is coordinated by the UW Carlton Center. GPSS set up a team and helped to clean up the Olympic Sculpture Park in downtown Seattle. The GPSS Secretary should definitely continue participating in this event in future years. I would further suggest considering putting together a GPSS team for the UW Relay for Life event.

## **Staff Summaries**

### **Publications Assistants (Nick Wehner and Ben Henry)**

The GPSS Publications Assistant is responsible for assisting the GPSS Secretary in the preparation of a variety of documents and flyers for the organization. The most important duty of the Publications Assistant is the preparation of meeting minutes for all Senate and Executive Committee meetings. Nick, the PA for the majority of the year, has done an exemplary job in preparing the minutes, which he immediately sends to me following the adjournment, with little need of any editing. He's also been responsible for the creation of several event advertisements, including Winter Speed Dating and the Spring Social. He did a phenomenal job as MC for the Speed Dating event, too. He put together the majority of the Senate Powerpoint presentations as well as a flyer for the WSA donation option on MyUW. He also wrote the first draft of the press release following the announcement of President Emmert's resignation and compiled and formatted the brand new GPSS Dispute Resolution Advisory Committee guide book.

### **Web Developers (Kendall Becherer and Trond Nilsen)**

The bulk of the new GPSS website was designed and developed by Executive Senator Trond Nilsen, as previously reported. Trond worked closely with the GPSS officers in order to organize and then develop menus, blogs, pages and content. When Kendall was hired at the beginning of the school year Trond helped to explain the current site to her. Kendall has since been responsible for a redesign, including the implementation of a new theme and greater use of images. Her changes to the website have all been applied efficiently and effectively. She has had frequent meetings with me in order to continually adapt our website to our evolving needs. She has been able to adopt all of the officers' requests in a timely manner, especially after ASUW was able to make the needed updates to the server that houses the GPSS website. GPSS should strongly consider the purchase of its own web server in the future.