GPSS Executive Committee Meeting Minutes - December 7, 2011

Members Present:
Aaron Naumann (President-outgoing)
Colin Goldfinch (Treasurer)
Melanie Mayock (Secretary)
Charles Plummer (President – incoming, by phone)
Adam Sherman (Vice President)
Megan Gambs (Executive Senator)

Others Present:
Rene Singleton, SAO Advisor

1. Call to Order
Aaron calls meeting to order at 6:06pm

2. Approval of the Agenda
Colin proposes to replace Item 4b (UW budgeting and student participation) with a GPSS budget discussion, including the Not For Tourists Guide.

Melanie proposes to add an Item 2b to the agenda, as a Special Announcement.

Adam moves to approve the agenda, as amended with new items 4b and 2b.
Melanie seconds.
All in favor, motion passes.

2b. Special Announcement
Melanie showers Aaron with farewell gifts. Aaron opens presents and gives heartfelt thanks. Aaron also thanks Rudy (who is not here).

3. Approval of the Minutes from 11/16 Executive Committee Meeting
Adam moves to approve the minutes.
Melanie seconds.
All in favor. Motion passes.

4a. Special Session (Adam)
The Special Session started Nov 28th. Two days later the GPSS Senate voted to approve the GPSS legislative agenda. Special Session going until Christmas. General consensus is that the budget will not be passed before the legislature adjourns at the end of December, which means there won't be a revenue ballot measure in March.

Melanie: Why is March important?
Adam: March is the normal time to put out a ballot measure, and there will already be other ballot measures at that time. It would defeat the purpose of raising money if we had to spend new money to have a ballot measure at a different time.

Adam talks about Inputs, Outputs and Outcomes for the Legislative session. Identified key dates. Need three legislative plans by Jan 4th. Making sure key players know what priorities are- talk to key leadership, key staff, key committees. Outputs- find 5 famous alumni, 15 mtgs with legislators in district over break. Putting together talking points.

Question: Can Executive Committee members set up meetings with their legislators over winter break?

Melanie: knows who her legislators are but will be out of town for a while over break.

Adam will be reaching out to the legislative steering committee members as well, to ask them to meet with their legislators.

Colin: in terms of us having meeting with legislators, do you have specific things you want us to try?

Adam: depending on where you live, legislators want to hear from constituents. Suggest calling them. Looking to meet with legislator before the regular session and talk to them about priorities as a constituent.

Megan: do legislators have coffee hours with constituents?

Adam: maybe.

4b. GPSS Budget

Colin: one of my major objectives is to do a good consultation for next year’s GPSS budget. Speak to students in general (surveys), get in touch with Senators, working with F&B committee and with campus groups to get perspective on what a good graduate student senate budget looks like. Point of this is to make sure budget for next year is not just copy and pasting this year’s numbers on to next year’s. Want to make sure there are more resources for advocacy and diversity. Adam spoke with other student governments while at the SAGE conference. Adam and Colin will talk more about what he learned at SAGE.

Melanie: What is the timeline for the budget?

Colin: We will present the budget to the Senate for a vote in February. The hope is to have something done earlier but might be tricky to have a consultation done by then.
Charles: personnel costs are not very flexible. What is your strategy for dealing with lack of room for expansion, how are you thinking about the prioritization process?

Colin: talking with students about what they want out of their student government (advocacy, events, etc) and also looking internally. Talk with staff- who has extra capacity.

Charles: do you want officers to supply budget narratives about where they see resources within their realm?

Colin: yes.

Adam: Colin is really thoughtful in thinking about how our budget is in line with our values and what we want to do. I came up with my own ideas for the budget and am putting them out there.

Melanie: from my perspective, both of the those processes are useful (external and internal).

Colin: hope to get things going over the holidays.

Not For Tourist Guides
Three years ago we spent $25,000 on NFT guides. Get some thoughts on what we hope to get out of this project in the end.

Melanie: if we don’t have major costs for books, how much staff time? Would publications assistant be expected to create the guide?

Rene: second person who was hired helped do the guide last time. If you took the current document and made it into an online tool, then the structure is already in place. I recall lots of hours of time when publisher was in New York. Staff member hired to be writer and someone hired 20 hours a week for guide updates.

Melanie: look at previous year’s staff time to see how much time was spent working on this.

Aaron: moving towards digital platform

Charles: good model- Health Care Portal put together 2 years ago. Moving towards something more like that. Having a digital delivery of this should be the long-term goal, make portability the goal. Printing books doesn’t make any sense.

Colin: advertise web portal- still having something physical to hand out.

Rene: you guys don’t have any visibility on campus
Melanie: I agree that it is nice to have a physical document at some point (for orientation)

Colin: moving forward, looking at IT and web development line in budget

4c. January 11th Senate Meeting
- Guest speaker? (Ana Mari Cauce, new Provost)
- Small group break out?

Melanie: Going to propose a resolution in support of the undergrad Diversity Requirement, to be voted on at the January Senate meeting. Don’t expect that to be controversial or take a lot of time.

Megan: concern about how it will be implemented and affect different departments, would like to hear from faculty before students vote on it. Precedence of graduate students voting on undergraduate education, could this lead to undergrads voting on graduate education?

Adam: may lead to students leading to thinking about issues in diversity when they become graduate students. But maybe a resolution should be more generalized support, rather than supporting this specific proposal.

Melanie: hesitant about doing water-downed resolution. Do we want to do more background work and then have a resolution for February? If we are not ready, maybe we should wait until Feb.

Rene: Undergrads may also not be ready, so you guys have time.

Aaron: The new requirement would create more work for departments.

Megan: It’s written very different from other requirements.

Colin: why are we discussing the diversity issue now?

Melanie: I had mentioned having the resolution at the January Senate meeting. We will re-visit this.

Comments on guest speakers/ small groups at January Senate meeting?

Melanie: We should continue with the same small groups of Senators as last meeting, but provide resources for them to move forward. We should allocate 30 minutes for that type of activity
Adam: An idea from ASUW- a card for students to fill out during class that collects information.

Melanie: If we ask people to sign up to volunteer and get involved, we want to be prepared that we have things for people to do.

Colin: what if, in addition to those ideas, we compile a list of large classes and pass those out to Senators during the small group exercise, and ask them to go talk to the classes.

Charles: There may be an issue with timing for small group break-outs. Last meeting some of the groups were sitting around after a few minutes; only some people spoke up. We need to keep momentum going during meeting.

Melanie: Some of the small groups were very engaged and didn’t have enough time. If groups run out of time, we should give them a way to get each other’s contact information. Could have one point person for each group.

Colin: I like the idea of having the new Provost as next meeting speaker. Maybe we can have small groups meet and discuss University budget issues and come up with questions to ask her.

Rene: make sure that the Provost does not show up while discussions are going on and she has to wait.

Charles: I think it is a good idea, but we want to make sure we maximize effectiveness of senate meetings

Adam: maybe we should focus on legislative issues in January and invite the Provost in February. We could get Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn (he is former GPSS). He would be great for getting people excited about advocacy.

Melanie: I think that we should limit guest speakers.

Colin: what if we gave Mike McGinn a specific topic to talk about, like being a student activist, and limit the topic that way.

Adam: Let’s try to get McGinn as guest speaker to talk about student activism and then small group discussions related to the topic

Charles: I like idea of limiting the scope. If we can get him that would be great.

Melanie: In terms of Lobby Day, last year hardly any Senators came. They would probably be more likely if other people they know are going. Let’s encourage Senators to talk about that in the small groups – and maybe attend with other Senators.
5. Officer Reports

a. Vice President (Adam)
   Have been meeting with as many legislators as possible.

b. Treasurer (Colin)
   Trying to get last details with computers bought over summer
   Focus on budget consultation
   Speed Dating in February.

c. Secretary (Melanie)
   First meeting of DRAC (Dispute Resolution Advisory Committee). Trond had the idea of moving the committee towards advocating for policies within departments, rather than one-on-one consultation with students. Pursuing this idea.

   Judicial Committee had its first meeting of the year on Monday, but did not have quorum, so did not elect a Chair or do anything official. Quorum is 4 committee members; only 3 attended. The Senators on the committee are interested in bylaw changes. If officers or staff have ideas for bylaw changes, let me know.

Diversity: informal working group has had a few meetings. Want to focus on how we can bring diversity policies to the department level.

UPASS:
   - Requests for exemptions, including petition from Executive Masters of Public Health.
   - Do we want to say that there are no exemptions at an advisory board meeting in January
   - Message to students when they register is questioned
   - There is a resolution in the ASUW Senate to exempt distance learners from UPASS

Website:
   - GPSS website being updated

d. ASUW

e. President (Aaron)
   - Transition to Charles
   - Discussion- GPSS left out of planning of 150 years celebration and also President Wise’s departure. Making sure that GPSS is not left out on purpose.
   - Meeting with Graduate School Dean Gerald Baldasty, discussion of fee-based programs. Fee-based programs may be the least diverse of all the programs
   - Alumni events coming up; Charles will represent GPSS
Megan asks about having a line in the UW registration that tells graduate students they are GPSS students, similar to the information about becoming an ASUW member.

Charles answers question about voting member of ASUW- it is in their constitution and it is there as a legal requirement which includes all students.

Aaron: GPSS may not be reaching non-matriculated students, which may number 45,000. Can ASUW or GPSS reach these individuals legally to advocate on behalf of them? Randy Hodgins (UW External Affairs) working through legal aspects on that.

Megan: To clarify, we don’t represent them, correct?

Aaron: My understanding is that GPSS or ASUW don’t represent them.

6. Announcements

Rene thanks Aaron for his leadership and work here at GPSS.

Aaron: there is a lot for students to take on. Administration is recognizing the strength of our voice, we need to make sure that we don’t lose that trust. Aaron thanks all the officers and executive senators for their hard work this year.

7. Adjourn
Adam moves to adjourn at 7:43pm
Melanie seconds.
All in favor.