

GPSS Senate Meeting November 30, 2011 Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

Aaron Naumann calls the meeting to order at 5:37pm

2. Approval of the Agenda

Ted Chen, Bioengineering: Moves to approve the agenda.

Dan Cortez, iSchool: Seconds.

None opposed. Motion passes.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Edward Schwieterman, Astronomy: Moves to approve the minutes from the November 2nd meeting.

Gregor Passolt, Quantitative Ecology and Resource Management: Seconds.

None opposed. Motion passes.

4. Special Election

Aaron introduces Trond Nilsen (Industrial Engineering) from the Executive Committee.

Trond explains the Special Election process: The Executive Senators created election rules that were sent to Senators two weeks ago.

Introduction to President's Role:

Aaron gives short introduction to the position of the President, including committees the President sits on, roles and responsibilities. For more information on the role and responsibilities of the GPSS President, please visit:

<http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/senate/officers/elections>

And see Elections Guide section 3.1

Question pertaining to hours - limited to 20 hours/week?

Aaron: Hours over 20/week are voluntary, but getting the job done requires 40-60 hours a week.

Aaron: Critical aspect is understanding the structure of how University committees work.

Nominations from the floor:

Charles Plummer (Earth and Space Sciences) nominates himself.

There are no other nominations from the floor.

Charles introduces himself. Has spent over 3 years in GPSS as a Senator, served on the Executive Committee, currently chairs the Provost Advisory Committee for Students. Worked on Student Technology Fee, UPASS, and other issues. Already knows the Exec Committee.

Second nominations:

No other nominations.

Trond explains that it would be a yes/no vote of confidence in the case of only one candidate.

Questions for Candidate:

1. Aaron Naumann, President: What are your top three priorities?

Charles Plummer: First priority is getting students involved in the University budget process. Second priority is figuring out as a grad student body what the next steps are for lobbying within the university. Third: transportation. Transportation costs are going to increase in the future. Need to think about how to build relationships with King County Metro as well as other large transportation users in the next 5 to 10 years.

2. Megan Gambs, Oceanography: Why have you decided to run for president?

Charles Plummer: This is the last year I can have an impact on the campus. It's our responsibility to help each other. Want to be able to say that I have helped my fellow students as much as I could.

3. Mateo Banegas, Public Health: The President spends on average 15-20 hours a week in meetings. Will you be able to attend these?

Charles: I only do research, so my schedule is flexible.

Kiana Scott, Public Affairs: How will you handle taking office in the middle of the year?

Charles: Working with Aaron and catching up with him. Being on the Exec Committee for the past 3 years I understand the stakeholders

Karl Starns, JSIS Russian, European and Central Asian Studies: Do you think your vision with GPSS coincides with current president, or if not, how does it differ?

Charles: My vision is mostly one of maintenance, not to shake things up or change course of direction. Aaron and I agree with many of the issues.

Voting:

Charles is taken out of the room and the Senators vote on paper ballots, administered by the Executive Senators. The vote is a yes/no vote of confidence in Charles Plummer.

5. Approval of Legislative Agenda

Adam Sherman talks about the GPSS state and federal legislative agendas.

We have two GPSS legislative steering committees. This year we had a very compressed schedule because of the special sessions happening in Olympia this month. Please make sure this is in line with the values of your constituents.

1. State Legislative Agenda

Big budget shortfall, state funding is definitely at risk here at UW.

Highlights:

- preserve all funding for higher education in 2012-2013 session
- eliminate unnecessary tax loopholes
- create a variety of revenue packages
- funding higher education is a way out of the recession
- higher education is a good return on investment
- create incentives for students to pursue advanced degrees and for businesses to stay in WA.

GPSS 2012 Priorities

- no additional cuts
- bold revenue packages
- financial aid- Washington work study program, child care matching grant
- improved efficiency- reduce administrative costs, reduce time to degree

Questions:

Chris Lizotte, Geography: How will we deal with the restrictions from the Tim Eyman initiative on tax increases?

Adam: A tax increase would require a referendum because it's not feasible to get 2/3 vote in the Senate. To put a tax package on the March ballot would require a vote by the legislature by Dec 17; otherwise a later referendum would have higher administrative costs. Once it becomes a referendum we are not allowed to take a stance on it.

In terms of more permanent revenue, there are a lot of ideas out there. That is why I left the language vague so that I don't have to come back and get a new vote by the Senate each time.

Aaron: we are really trying to think outside the box, moving away from consumer consumption which may fluctuate. Other ideas are formation of a state bank low interest loans for WA residents. But we need flexibility in language for Adam to lobby.

2. Federal Legislative Agenda

Priorities:

- Funding
- Bold revenue packages
- Financial aid and access- always fight for it

- Visa reform- we do this every year
- Loan forgiveness programs- payments on federal loans never exceed 15% of discretionary income. After 20 years all loans are forgiven, if you go in to public service, done after 10 years.
- Improved Efficiency
- Academic Excellence

Aaron: last year we lost subsidized loans for grad students.

David Scoville, Occupations Health Sciences: there is a typo?

Adam: please email Melanie re: typos

Naomi Campa, Classics: How can the language support humanities or those disciplines outside of STEM majors?

Adam: Spillover affects every single department, so science is not siloed. No one person or 10 people can reflect the collective voice of everyone. I agree that what you don't say is as loud as what you do say.

Erin Abu-Rish, Nursing: During the spring of 2001 at Western Washington University, there was a good speaker about the value of a liberal arts education.

Aaron: The new provost can help with that too.

Liana Wood, Pathobiology: There is a significant risk of cutting residency opportunities, which would reduce the ability of med students to learn.

Adam: Can you suggest a sentence for that issue?

Liana Wood, Pathobiology: "preserve funding for graduate medical education"

Naomi Campa, Classics: We should include language about the importance of arts and humanities.

Aaron: adds language to the Federal Legislative Agenda

John Huang, Epidemiology: Moves approval of the State and Federal Legislative Agendas.

Ted Chen, Bioengineering, seconds.

None opposed, no abstentions. Legislative Agendas approved.

Election Results:

92 senators voted yes for Charles Plummer.

1 voted against him.

Charles is elected the new GPSS President.

6. Student Engagement

Melanie Mayock introduces the student engagement segment and gives examples of how to get more students to contact legislators.

Senators break up into groups based on program and brainstorm ideas.

Group Reports:

Kimberly Schertz, Law: One of our ideas was to get legislators to come to the students.
Aaron: great idea, we have had legislators come to campus before.

Sarah Bergman, Earth and Space Sciences: Try and recruit specific students to have experts in the field speak to why funding for that field is important.

Ginger Farrell, French and Italian: Humanities pub crawl and write postcards.
Interviewing graduate students, one person tells story, the other writes it.
Aaron Naumann: We've talked about video-vignettes to send out to legislators.

Eddie Schwieterman, Astronomy: Series where we solicit responses from students and submit it into a contest. Another idea is having a calling party to contact legislators.
Also, having groups of departments call.

Alden Denny, Oceanography: Combine skill that we all need (self-marketing) with the stories that GPSS needs. Individual graduate students able to describe their research and impacts.

Laine Anderson, Speech and Hearing Sciences: Write letters if it is easier for them: put postcards in grad lounges for students to easily write a postcard.

Sean Wilson, ASUW: The GPSS website has templates for letter writing, under the Action Alerts section.

Trond (Industrial Engineering): Come up with talking points for departments to give them the information.

7. GPSS Financial Update

Colin Goldfinch gives update on GPSS year-to-date spending, mid-June through November 10. Use of online transaction system to follow spending throughout the year. These numbers are reliable and relevant to decision-making, but bear in mind that some transactions have not shown up yet.

Revenue: we have not gotten the full amount of revenue stipulated in yearly budget. 1) SAF paid incrementally in chunks throughout the year. 2) Fundraising to support events

and Higher Ed Summit- we got \$18,000 so far. Also, we had 2 largest events already and have come in under budget.

Personnel: spending for staff and officers is under budget and will probably be at budget by the end of the year.

Number in account is an estimate and we have regular audits.

Yasmeen Hussain, Biology: Regarding copies in the Treasurer and Secretary budgets, can you explain the footnotes?

Colin: I wanted to leave footnotes in to give rationale for the numbers. Info on budget lines. That may be an error, and I may check it.

Yasmeen Hussain: What is the phone service fees?

Colin: Increase in fees; UW tech controls it.

Aaron: If you have physical structure for offices you have to pay for it.

8. Announcements

Melanie Mayoock, Secretary: There's an opportunity to go to Olympia this Friday with the Washington Bus, a non-profit organization. Will send out more information by email.

Onyinye Edeh, Global Health: Tomorrow is World AIDS Day, 3:30 to 5:30pm in Smith Hall.

Evan Smith, ASUW: Student Senate passed diversity requirement yesterday for undergraduate education.

Trond Nilsen, Industrial Engineering: Thank you Aaron for your service at GPSS.

9. Adjourn

Ted Chen, Bioengineering: Moves to adjourn

Becky Edmonds, LGBTQ: Seconds.

No objections; motion passes. Meeting adjourns at 7:37pm.