GPSS Senate Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 13th 2021, 5:30pm via Zoom

# Members present:

GPSS President Aaron Yared

GPSS Vice President of Internal Affairs Genevieve Hulley

GPSS Vice President of External Affairs Hannah Sieben

GPSS Secretary Logan C. Jarrell

GPSS Treasurer Julia Overfelt

~~Executive Senator Monica Jensen~~

Executive Senator Terrence Pope

Executive Senator Andrew Shumway

Executive Senator Marty Varela

Executive Senator Britahny Baskin

ASUW Director of Internal Policy Antonio Gonzalez

Associate Director of Student Activities Rene Singleton

Associate Dean of Student and Postdoctoral Affairs Bill Mahoney

# 1. [Action] Call to Order 5:33pm

**Aaron Yared** called the meeting to order at 5:33pm.

# 2. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 5:34pm

**Genevieve Hulley** moved to approve the agenda. **Logan Jarrell** seconded. No objections.

# 3. [Action] Approval of the Minutes 5:34pm

**Justin Pothoof (Chemistry)** moved to approve the minutes. **Gabby Rivera (Evans School of Public Policy & Governance)** seconded. No objections.

# 4. [Information] Land Acknowledgment 5:34pm

***Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association)*** *gave the land acknowledgment.*

**Aaron Yared** said that while many people expected 2020 to be the end of a series of unfortunate events, the past couple of days were filled with many trials. He said that COVID was still rampant across the country, the criminal justice system is still broken and white supremacy was still rearing its ugly head. He said that he felt an overwhelming sense of anger followed quickly by the grim reminder that our work is far from over. He said that all the things that the GPSS fought for last year were still things that it needed to continue fighting for this year. He said that the poet Aberjhani said “It can be difficult to speak truth to power. Circumstances, however, have made doing so increasingly necessary.” He said that the quote felt relevant now more than ever. He acknowledged the presence of raw emotions in the room and that the Executive Committee proposed to hold another space where people could express themselves before the national presidential inauguration. He asked people who were interested in the event or had ideas on how to improve from the previous one to contact GPSS via email.

**Aaron Yared** said that he hoped everyone would take the opportunity to think about their position within the university as well as their positions within GPSS and ask how they can affect change with the time they have left.

# 5. [Information] Breakout Room Discussion 5:35pm

*Senators were sent to breakout rooms for five minutes.*

*The questions were “How was your break?” and “What are your priorities for this year?”*

**Aaron Yared** asked whether anybody had anything notable that they did over the break or any notable goals that they wanted to share with everyone.

**Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association)** said that she did not have any notable goals but that she wanted to share that Natalie Vaughan-Wynn (Geography) and Michelle Noyes (Genome Sciences) were new to GPSS.

**Aaron Yared** welcomed all the new Senators to the meeting.

**Hannah Sieben** shared her goal of wanting a successful Grad Student Day on the Hill. She said that it would take place on February 24. She said she would publicize it more and hoped that the event would have a great turnout so that legislators could see that graduate students were still engaged in a virtual world.

**Aaron Yared** recognized Hannah Sieben for virtually testifying to Olympia today about student health insurance. He said that people could watch it on UW TV.

**Britahny Baskin (Neuroscience**) said that she received her first dose of the COVID vaccine. She said that she was unsure if she received it for health reasons or availability reasons. She said that she was feeling fine and looking forward to the second dose.

# 6. [Information] Counseling Center Presentation 5:46pm

**Dr. Amy Collins** greeted the Senators and said that she had sent out an email with some information on the campus resources’ new crisis resource options, the group and outreach options, and other resources. She said she would mention some resources in her presentation, but said that the Senators should not worry about remembering all of the information because she would send out the email with links to information on the Counseling Center’s website.

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that she was from the Counseling Center. She said that she wanted to let everyone know about the resources available to students and normalize everything that people were dealing with. She acknowledged that it was a difficult time and that everyone was in it together. She said that students, depending on their department what program, had different experiences on receiving accommodations. She said it was fine to not perform at the same level as people did prior to the pandemic. She said it was good to acknowledge the stress and the normalcy of stress in the current situation.

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that she observed many people getting frustrated that they were not performing as much as they did prior to the pandemic in terms of grades, focus, and productivity. She said it was very important that people still work to meet their goals, but that they should also adjust their expectations based on the current situation.

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that stress impacted people regardless of how well they were coping or how smart they were. She said stress impacted different people in different ways. She said it could reduce focus and motivation and impact attention, mood, sleep, eating, and daily functioning. She said that this impact was exclusive of any mental health disorders and that it was a human reaction to stress. She said that with everything going on such as the pandemic and political climate, it was common for people to be under increased stress. She said it was important to acknowledge that there was a differential impact, depending on what identities people held and what communities they were a part of. She said that everyone should give themselves and each other the benefit of the doubt, credit, and self compassion.

**Dr. Amy Collins** said people tend to be harder on themselves than they were on others. She said that most people would not accuse a friend of being lazy if the friend opened up about their academic struggles and insomnia. She said that people were often compassionate to others but passed harsher judgment on themselves when faced with the same situation. She said it was important for people to focus on giving themselves time and self compassion when reaching out for necessary support.

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that people sometimes said “I don't think I should be getting counseling. There's probably people who need it more.” She said that if people felt that the resources might be helpful, they should use the resources. She said that confidential services were available on campus and were offered remotely. She said that the resources existed for student use.

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that the Counseling Center, which is located in Schmitz Hall, was in the process of merging with the mental health clinic at Hall Health. She said that there was one number for students to call if they needed to meet with a counselor. She said that there was no cost to students; previously students needed insurance to access services at Hall Health She said that the Counseling Center would shift its model in the future and added that the Counseling Center was also increasing the number of group and drop-in workshops. She said that to meet students' needs, the Counseling Center had created a group called Between Cultures which offered workshops on how to get necessities, relationships, mental health skills during the pandemic, mindfulness, compassion, allyship, anti-racism, mindfulness, procrastination, and perfectionism. She said that the Counseling Center had “Let’s Talk” consultation opportunities, a group for international students called Plugin, a BIPoC Healing Circle, Beyond Labels for queer identifying students, and Umoji, a group for black and brown identifying women.

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that the Counseling Center was adjusting its offerings and adding options to meet students’ needs as things changed. She emphasized that the Counseling Center was available for students to reach out. She said that the university had created a partnership with a company that provided a service called My SSP, also known as My Student Support Program, in which students can receive free and confidential crisis services. My SSP gave students the opportunity to meet with a licensed mental health professional and contact them through a phone call or on the My SSP app. Dr. Amy Collins offered to send out information about My SSP and said that more information could be found on the Counseling Center’s website.

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that King Country had a crisis line and other campus partners such as LiveWell for students struggling academically due to mental health reasons, or family emergencies. She noted that the Counseling Center could only provide counseling for students who were physically located in Washington. She said that students located out of the state could not receive counseling from the Counseling Center because the counselors at the Counseling Center were not licensed to practice outside of the state of Washington. She said My SSP provided free, confidential remote short term counseling for all students, regardless of their location. She said that the Counseling Center planned to continue providing both in person and remote services even after the pandemic was over. She said that counselors found that remote counseling sessions increased accessibility for students in multiple ways. She said that the Counseling Center saw students for a range of concerns, whether it was for stress management, academic fit, anxiety, depression, or relationship concerns.

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that people who had experienced oppression discrimination and were trying to navigate their feelings, especially if the experience impacted their functioning and mental health, then they should reach out to the Counseling Center for support. She said that if the Counseling Center was not a good fit or if a student needed more intensive or more specialized services, the Counseling Center could provide referrals and act as a bridge while connecting the student to more appropriate resources. She said that the Counseling Center welcomed any calls about students concerned about their friends or students in their classes. She said that My SSP was a good contact for crisis situations. She invited everyone to ask questions.

**Julia Overfelt** volunteered to read the list of questions for Dr. Amy Collins.

**Question:** Is the counseling service able to handle the present demand of students?

**Dr. Amy Collins** said it depended on what “handle” meant. She said she thought the Counseling Center was handling the students in terms of not having significantly longer wait times for services than usual due to the partnership with My SSP. She noted that My SSP’s partnership was made through a temporary contract. She said that having My SSP handle some of the crisis services freed up time on the counselors’ schedules to see other clients. She said that because of the merge between Hall Health staff and the Counseling Center, the number of appointments would be impacted for a few weeks. She explained that the mental health staff from Hall Health needed to learn a new scheduling and appointment system. She said that the Counseling Center also observed a reduction in demand for services in the spring and summer which was counterintuitive since people were going through a pandemic. She explained that when people are going through a crisis, they switch to survival mode and do what is necessary. She says that once people become conscious of their crisis or the impact of the crisis, they reach out for support. She said that currently the Counseling Center was seeing an increase in demand as people became ready to seek help. Dr. Amy Collins said she did not know the exact numbers to compare to the numbers seen last fall.

**Question:** Prior to the pandemic, students were not able to book appointments; has that changed?

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that the Counseling Center recently started having some appointments available to schedule online whereas before, students needed to call to schedule an initial appointment. She said that the students had been able to schedule appointments throughout.

**Question:** What advice would you have for graduate students who want to make time for these services, but are struggling to do so personally and departmentally?

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that it was a hard question because she was aware how packed people’s schedules were. She advised people to try out counseling and continue if they felt that it was worthwhile. She said that sometimes when people were struggling and did not feel like they had enough time, while not always the case, it can be a manifestation of avoidance and procrastination as well. She said that setting aside time to work on taking care of oneself can help people feel less overwhelmed. She said that in reality, people were busy: if they could not fit counseling into their schedule, the Counseling Center had resources on its website and links to other information in terms of self help and mindfulness resources.

**Question:** Do you think that virtual counseling will remain an option when students return to a fully in-person setup? I'm thinking of people that may be more comfortable in their own spaces?

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that it was the Counseling Center’s hope. She said that the Center found that there were advantages to remote counseling and wanted to continue offering the service since it increases accessibility for students and some people prefer it.

**Question:** Does UW mental health services voluntarily commit students for reasons such as suicide or substance use and what is your perspective on an involuntary psychiatric commitment?

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that it was very rare and that the Counseling Center did not commit people. She said that it was based on Washington State law. She said that in her eight years as a counselor at the Counseling Center, she only knew of one person who had been committed for substance use. She said that if someone was intoxicated to the point that the counselors were worried their life or others might be an immediate danger, they would call 911 and emergency responders would determine whether they needed to be taken to a hospital.

**Dr. Amy Collins** said if someone was considering suicide and were determined to be at an imminent or high risk and were unwilling to discuss safety planning or to agree to use crisis resources or anything like that, then counselors would advise them to go to the emergency room and consider sending out a mobile crisis unit to meet with the student. She said that the Counseling Center worked to have someone reach out to students. She said that sometimes the police were dispatched to assess the situation because the Counseling Center did not have the privilege to voluntarily send someone. She said that the Center sometimes called the King County Crisis Line which could dispatch a mobile crisis unit, but sometimes it took up to four hours for them to respond. She said that if counselors felt that a student’s life was in imminent danger, then the counselors would reach out to their emergency contacts and the mobile crisis unit, or, in the worst case scenario, police, and other emergency responders. She said that police were the last option and that counselors always consulted with each other, ideally with a member of the administrative clinical staff or a student’s clinical administrators before making that kind of decision.

**Question:** What is the student to counselor ratio?

**Dr. Amy Collins** said she did not know the ratio. She said it would change because of the merger. She said that some people have left their positions due to funding reasons. She said she could get the data if people wanted it.

**Julia Overfelt** said that it would be great if Dr. Amy Collins could send the data to GPSS.

**Question:** Is there culturally competent counseling available to students?

**Dr. Amy Collins** said she thought so. She said that the Center was always aware that it was a moving target and something that could not be perfected. She said that the Center would not ever get to a point where it deemed itself perfect in cultural competence. She said that the Center was evaluating antiracism and receiving training on providing services to students that are culturally competent. She said that the counselors were doing their own work of being aware of their biases and decolonize their practices and make their system antiracist. She said she had an increase in work that revolved around increasing cultural competency. She said she hesitated to give a solid “yes,” because she believed that there was always more work that the Center could be doing.

**Question:** We have heard your app is not sufficient, because if you talk to a counselor on it, they'll recommend that you reach out to a counselor at the university. What are you doing to address this issue?

**Dr. Amy Collins** said she had not heard of that issue. She said this was possibly a reference to My SSP and said that she would check with the clinical director and ask her to reach out to GPSS with more information.

**Question:** what advice do you have for students who have trouble getting an appointment?

**Dr. Amy Collins** asked students to call the Counseling Center. She said that a call would allow the Center to understand the circumstances and provide an opportunity for follow up. She said that due to demand, it was not usually possible to schedule a same-day appointment, but that sometimes there were last minute cancellations. She said that if students felt that a call to the Center’s staff was insufficient, she said students could ask for a counselor or administrator to be informed for a follow-up.

**Question:** Can you restate the resource for out-of-state students in need of mental health support?

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that out-of-state students could use My SSP and the Crisis Counseling service. She said that out-of-state students could use My SSP for short-term counseling services and that the counselors on My SSP could provide services in several different languages and locations. She said that there were counselors for different time zones.

**Questions:** How might we frame the availability of resources for someone for whom we are concerned?

**Dr. Amy Collins** said that for general counseling services, one could say “A lot of people are stressed or anxious or whatever. I wonder if you're experiencing that and here's why I'm concerned.” She said that students should try to be open and nonjudgmental. She said that students could also share their experiences if they felt comfortable letting others know that they are not alone. She said that students should let their peers know that the available counseling services are free and confidential. She said that students could meet with counselors remotely from the comfort of their own home and talk with someone about their concerns and that students did not need to know what type of counseling was best for them--the counselors could connect them with different services and just encourage them to try it out, or, if it is a crisis, to try out My SSP. She said that counselors were open to helping students make the call. She said students could help their peers by letting others know about the resources and normalizing the concerns that they are experiencing.

**Aaron Yared** thanked Dr. Amy Collins for her presentation. He said that the Senators could email the Executive Committee if they had further questions.

**Dr. Amy Collins** thanked everyone for their time.

# 7. [Action] First Reading of Fossil Fuel Divestment Resolution 6:16pm

**Andrew Shumway (Earth and Space Sciences)** said that the Fossil Fuel Divestment Resolution was basically a continuation of work from last year. He said that this was an opportunity to pass a joint resolution with ASUW to call on the University of Washington to divest all holdings and investments from fossil fuel industries and invest in sustainable solutions instead. He put a link to the resolution in the chat so that the Senators could read the resolution in their own time.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth and Space Sciences)** said he would hit the highlights of the resolution’s “whereas” statements. He said that the resolution aimed to have the university recognize the impact of climate change on the environment and recognize the economic impact that climate change will have in the future. He said that the resolution pointed out the responsibility and ethical standards that the Board of Regents held the university to and specifically their responsibility to be good stewards of the resources of the University of Washington. The resolution also specifically highlighted past commitments that the university had made in this area and previous divestment from thermal coal in 2014. He said that the university had yet to take public action towards further divestment from fossil fuels. He noted that many of UW’s peer institutions, such as the University of Hawaii, Oregon State, the whole University of California system, had already made similar divestments or pledges to divest from fossil fuels.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth and Space Sciences)** said that the resolution highlighted that the divestment was not already part of the current climate action or sustainability plans, so the resolution called for an extra step to have the university specifically divest from fossil fuels. He said that divesting from fossil fuels was good because maintaining investments in fossil fuels was a huge financial risk to the university's pensions and endowment funds. He said that the UW should publicly announce that climate change is a crisis and an imminent threat to all humanity and all biological life on Earth and therefore commit to using all available means that its disposal to respond to the threat by decarbonizing its investments, operations, procurement contracts, and supply chain. He said that the resolution called upon the UW to stop investing or pursue investing within dominance or otherwise in the fossil fuel industry defined to include but not limited to coal, natural gas, and or any other petroleum-based fuel, as well as the extraction refinement distribution and use or digital support for those prophecies. The resolution called on the UW to divest all current holdings and investments in the fossil fuel industry no later than the fiscal year 2025. The resolution called on the UW to invest or allocate at least 2.5% of its endowments’ new investments towards sustainable solutions. He said that the resolution gave some examples of what that would look like.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth and Space Sciences)** referred to the UW’s direct and indirect divestments in the fossil fuel industry. He said that there was some terminology in the resolution regarding the supply chain and whether UW was supporting other companies that had investments in fossil fuels. Andrew Shumway (Earth and Space Sciences) said that the last point in the resolution was to come up with a tri-campus, strategic climate action plan. He asked whether there were any questions, comments, or friendly amendments.

**Logan Jarrell** raised a point of order. He said that friendly amendments were only offered during the second reading of a resolution.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that the resolution called for the university to reach zero carbon emissions on or before 2030. He asked whether there was a way to estimate what the impact of such an effort on tuition would be.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth and Space Sciences)** introduced resolution author and ASUW Senator Esaac Mazengiato to answer the question.

**Esaac Mazengia** said that most of the change would come from changing the power plant to a more renewable energy source. He said that the school sought state funding to change the power plant. He said that the power plant accounted for about 75% of the school’s emissions and that the majority of the change would hopefully be funded by the state.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** asked whether there had been an effort to bring the Faculty Senate on board. He said that in order to get a formal response from the board, the Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing (ACSRI) looked for the Faculty Senate’s support. He posted a [link](https://www.washington.edu/regents/governance/advisory-committee-on-socially-responsible-investing/) in the chat which described the process.

**Esaac Mazengia** said that he was following the guidelines posted by the ACSRI. He said that once the students on all three campuses passed the resolution, he was going to ask Faculty Senate. He said he was working with Clara Coyote, the ASUW Director of University Affairs and that once the resolution passed through GPSS and ASUW, he would go to the Faculty Senate.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth and Space Sciences)** said that everyone was welcome to add comments to the document until the second reading or reach out to him directly to discuss the resolution.

**Aaron Yared** asked Logan Jarrell whether the resolution needed to be voted to move to the second reading.

**Logan Jarrell** said the resolution could be voted to be referred to a committee or to be reconsidered in the future. He said that the resolution did not have to be voted into second reading.

# 8. [Information] Winter Working Groups 6:26pm

**Logan Jarrell** reminded everyone that working groups were held at the end of Senate meetings. He said that the Executive Committee wanted to revisit the topics because some topics had fallen out of interest amongst the Senators. He said that the Senate currently had eight working groups. He listed the topics: DEI and Anti-racism, Climate Change, Mental Health and Well being, Student Parents and Caregivers, University COVID Response, International Students, Student Health Insurance, and Undocumented Students.

**Logan Jarrell** said the Senators had an opportunity to join any of the eight working groups at the end of the meeting. He said that the purpose of this agenda item was to determine if there were any additional topics that Senators were interested in pursuing. He asked the Senators to submit their suggestions for working groups into the poll and that the Executive Committee would incorporate the top two choices into the working groups. He welcomed any questions.

**Jack Flesher (Music)** asked Logan Jarrell to give a brief description of what the groups did for any newcomers.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the purpose of the working groups was to give the Senators an outlet to connect with one another on issues that they were passionate about. He said that working groups could lead to resolutions or discussions which could be brought before committees that the work was relevant to. He added that working groups were also spaces just to connect with other Senators after the meeting.

**Genevieve Hulley** asked whether people could restate the topics that they were interested in because some working groups had little attendance.

**Logan Jarrell** said he could add the current ones and people could vote the topics up or down.

**Chianaraekpere Ike (School of Law)** asked whether groups would be dropped due to lack of votes.

**Aaron Yared** said that groups would not be dropped unless there was consistently poor attendance. He said that the Executive Committee was trying to figure out if there were other areas that people were more interested in.

**Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association)** asked what group Chianaraekpere Ike (School of Law) was concerned about.

**Genevieve Hulley** said that Chianaraekpere Ike (School of Law) was interested in the Student Parents and Caregivers Working Group.

# 9. [Information] Officer and Committee Reports 6:31pm

**Aaron Yared** reminded everyone how GPSS had voted on the resolution asking the UW to divest from law enforcement in the first Senate meeting of the academic year. He said that the administration had made some promises to change some policies regarding the UW Police Department (UWPD). He said he spoke to Vice President Suite yesterday and had asked for updates on the progress of divesting from law enforcement. He said that the UW finally received approval for the online reporting system which would allow people to submit whether they needed assistance and the nature of assistance they needed from the police did not send armed officers to every single situation, especially for mental health situations. He said that the UW was planning on doing a public release of the system within the month and had begun hiring unarmed responders which would move around campus. The armed police officers would stay on the border of the campus and would not patrol within. He said that the unarmed responders would ride golf carts. He said the student advisory board had received candid information from UWPD. He said that if Senators had any questions, they were welcome to send him an email.

**Terrence Pope (Psychology)** asked whether the unarmed responders would be marked as “security services” or something that would visually differentiate them from armed UWPD officers. He said he felt uncomfortable with the idea that there would be police officers who did not look like police officers and vice versa.

**Aaron Yared** said that from his understanding, the carts would be used by the responders. He said he did not know if the responders were police officers. He said he would follow up and come back with an actual answer.

**Genevieve Hulley** said that her team was scheduling a career type event that would happen later in the quarter. She said that during spring quarter, her team would organize an online academic symposium. She said that GPSS would also host some virtual wellness events and would send out a newsletter on Friday with more information for everyone.

**Hannah Sieben** said that the state legislative session had officially begun. She said she wanted more people to join the Legal Advisory Board (LAB) for the quarter. LAB meetings were held on Fridays at noon and the main purpose of LAB would be to help prepare for UW’s Grad Day on the Hill and get students comfortable with testifying. She said that if anyone was interested in participating or sharing their story with legislators, they should join LAB. She said that last quarter, LAB was focused on research; LAB would focus on advocacy this quarter.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** asked whether students still attend Grad Day on the Hill even if they could not make it to the LAB meetings.

**Hannah Sieben** said yes. She said that Grad Day on the Hill was open to all graduate and professional students. She said that LAB would send out an RSVP form in the newsletter going out on Friday. She said this year, Grad Day on the Hill would be different because people would not physically go to Olympia. She said that the benefit to this was that students did not have to be available for the entire day. She said that she would be happy to have as many participants as possible and hoped that people in LAB would act as group leaders for Grad Day on the Hill.

**Logan Jarrell** preemptively moved to extend time by 3 minutes. **Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association)** seconded. No objections.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the Equity and Accountability Committee (E&A) would conduct its annual Senate Composition survey this Winter. He said the survey would be administered by the middle of the quarter. He said that E&A was hoping to get 100% of Senators to participate in the survey. He encouraged everyone to share information about the GPSS diversity fund; more information about the diversity fund would be shared in Friday’s newsletter. He asked everyone to utilize the Counseling Center as soon as they needed to.

**Julia Overfelt** said that the Finance and Budget Committee was getting into the swing of things. She said that Travel Grants would pick up soon.

**Logan Jarrell** said he would contact Senators who had issues with attendance. He said the Senate roster would appear on the GPSS website soon.

# 10. [Information] Announcements 6:41pm

**Julia Overfelt** announced that the Student Technology Fee (STF) was now accepting proposals until January 22nd. She said that more information could be found on the STF website. She said that the STF was a technology fund for programs or schools, to purchase both software and hardware. She encouraged people to reach out to her and check out the STF website.

**Marty Varela** announced that the Officers were awesome. She said that the Officers had to balance their schoolwork on top of their GPSS duties. She said that the GPSS meetings ran so smoothly due to all the work the Officers put in prior to the meetings. She applauded the contributions that the Officers made for the first third of the school year. She encouraged everyone to observe the Officers’ graceful performance and be inspired to run in the coming elections.

**Aaron Yared** said that he was part of the Undocumented Students Working Group. He said that there was an event that the members of the working group wanted everyone to partake in if they had the time. The event would educate people on how to become an ally to undocumented students. He said it was a two day, virtual training. He said that he put the link to registration at the end of the chat and would send out an email about it after the meeting.

**Aaron Yared** said that one of the things he realized as part of the undocumented students working group was that he was unaware of the experiences of undocumented graduate and professional students. He said he was aware of some of the challenges they faced as an undergraduate student, but that the challenges mounted as fewer resources became available for graduate and professional students. He said learning how to become an ally for undocumented students was a valuable use of peoples’ time and asked people to attend the workshop if they had the time.

**Hannah Sieben** said she put a link in the chat to a form for collecting student stories. She asked people to submit stories in regards to paying tuition, not having health insurance, and other prompts listed on the form. She said that student stories made advocacy efforts more powerful. She asked the Senators to share the form widely, please.

**Aaron Yared** asked Logan Jarrell to give everyone an update on whether new working group topics had been chosen.

**Logan Jarrell** said there was general consensus for the current working groups. He said there was a lot of support for the topic of Disability Accessibility.

**Aaron Yared** said that Senators should join the working group that they are most interested in helping. He said that the working groups were only 20 minutes long.

**Chianaraekpere Ike (School of Law)** asked whether there was time to discuss something not on the agenda.

**Aaron Yared** said that in order to add something to the agenda, the Senate had to amend the agenda at the beginning of the meeting. He asked Chianaraekpere Ike (School of Law) if she wanted to make an announcement.

**Chianaraekpere Ike (School of Law)** thanked the Officers for their hard work. She said that based on the feedback from her constituents, it had been a difficult week, particularly with the recent events at the nation’s Capitol. She asked whether GPSS had put out a statement about the events.

**Aaron Yared** said that during the Executive Committee’s meeting last week on Wednesday, things were still unfolding and the Committee was unsure how far the situation would go. He said that the Committee did not discuss any actions, other than making a comment at this meeting, which is what he attempted to do at the beginning of the meeting. He said that the Committee talked about teaming up with ASUW to create a space where people could express themselves in the weeks before the national presidential inauguration, due to the heightened tensions. He said that the Committee did not talk about putting out a statement, but that they could do that. He said he personally felt angry at the recent events but was unsure how to solve the problem. He said that the GPSS still had work to do and acknowledged that Chianaraekpere Ike (School of Law) was right to call the GPSS out on their inaction.

# 11. [Action] Adjournment and Break into Working Groups 6:51pm

**Logan Jarrell** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Jack Flesher (Music)** seconded. No objections.

Meeting minutes prepared by **Janis Shin**, GPSS Senate Clerk.