



M-03.18-19 Memorandum on GPSS Non-Academic Seat Petition Process

To: GPSS Executive Committee
From: Amy Gabriel, Secretary
Date: January 8, 2019
Subject: Non-Academic Senate Seat Petitions

I. Introduction

The GPSS Constitution and Bylaws permit non degree-granting (or non-academic) programs advocating for underrepresented graduate and professional minority groups at the University of Washington one voting seat within the Senate. This opportunity grants agency to graduate students working on behalf of specific student interests and identities, such as student housing or veteran status, thus making GPSS membership and voting rights more accessible to underrepresented groups.

Despite recent updates to the GPSS Bylaws, no formal documentation exists regarding requirements and processes for non-academic programs to petition the GPSS for representation. I recommend the following policy change and attached template to provide clarification on the procedure for soliciting, reviewing, and approving one voting seat for non-academic programs within the GPSS. These changes will strengthen procedural consistency within our organization and increase overall transparency.

II. Policy Recommendation

Solicitation

The GPSS Diversity Committee shall take the lead, under supervision of the GPSS Secretary, on identifying and contacting non-academic programs that serve underrepresented graduate student populations regarding a GPSS seat petition. Non-academic programs serving underrepresented graduate students are also eligible to approach GPSS directly with inquiries regarding seat petitions. Any petition inquiries from such programs shall be directed to the GPSS Secretary.

Review

Upon completion of formal petition documentation (See Section III. Petition Template), the GPSS Secretary shall present the petition to the GPSS Executive Committee for review, similar to the formal GPSS resolution process. During the review, a representative (or “sponsor”) from the petitioning program shall present their petition to the GPSS Executive Committee for feedback. Upon approval through a majority vote, the GPSS Executive Committee will then list the petition on the agenda for the next scheduled Senate meeting, for review and final approval by the GPSS.

Approval

During the allocated time on the approved agenda, the petition sponsor shall present their petition to the GPSS. Should a petition sponsor be unable to present during the scheduled Senate meeting, all discussion and decisions regarding the petition will be tabled until a petition sponsor is available to petition the Senate. No sitting GPSS officer, staff, Executive Senator, or Senator shall be permitted to present the petition on behalf of a non-academic program.

The approval process shall be implemented in a manner similar to the second reading of a typical GPSS resolution. Upon completion of the petition presentation, deliberation shall commence. No further amendments may be offered during this period. Once the presenter has heard and addressed all questions and concerns, the GPSS shall move to a vote. Majority vote is required to approve the addition of one non-academic seat to the GPSS. All votes shall be recorded and made publicly available, consistent with GPSS Memorandum M-01-18.

III. Petition Template

The following template should be completed for all petitions to the Senate for non-academic program representation within the GPSS:

Title: **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A NON-ACADEMIC VOTING SEAT FOR [INSERT]**

Sponsored by: **[GPSS Secretary]**

Written by: **[Petition Sponsor]**

Resolution Number: #####

WHEREAS [Clause(s) establishing which organization is petitioning for a seat and what the role of that organization is on campus]

WHEREAS [Clause(s) establishing that the group in question should be considered an “underrepresented graduate and professional minority group” in the context of the representation]

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON:

THAT a Senate seat for under-represented graduate and professional minority groups be created by the GPSS under the procedures specified by Article III, Section C of the GPSS Constitution and filled by a graduate student elected by **[INSERT]**.

*Presented to GPSS for approval on
Approved on*

IV. Policy Implementation

With a majority vote of the GPSS Executive Committee, this memorandum shall stand as official GPSS policy, subject to review by the GPSS per Article VI, Section A, Clause 4 of the GPSS Bylaws¹. This memorandum may be amended by a majority vote of the GPSS Executive Committee.

¹ “Any actions of the Executive Committee are subject to review by the GPSS.”