GPSS Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 19th 2020, 2:00pm 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 Andrew Shumway

~~Executive Senator Terrence Pope~~

Executive Senator Monica Jensen

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~~

Husky Union Building Executive Director Justin Camputaro

# 1. [Action] Call to Order 2:01pm

**Aaron Yared** called the meeting to order at 2:01pm.

# 2. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 2:02pm

**Julia Overfelt** moved to approve the agenda. **Genevieve Hulley** seconded. No objections.

# 3. [Information] Approval of Minutes 2:02pm

**Monica Jensen** moved to approve the minutes. **Genevieve Hulley** seconded. No objections.

# 4. [Action] Senate Meeting Debrief 2:03pm

**Logan Jarrell** said he added a progress bar to the bottom of the Senate Meeting slides. He asked whether the progress bar was noticeable and helpful.

**Julia Overfelt** said she noticed it.

**Aaron Yared** said he did not see it, but that he was not looking at the slideshow during the meeting. He said it was a great idea.

**Logan Jarrell** said he coded the function into Google Slides. He said that the Senate should be more realistic with timing when drafting the meeting agendas. He said that now that Senators understood how meetings were run, more of the time was spent discussing the issues.

**Aaron Yared** said that he understood that meetings should be made as time-efficient as possible while making time for important items.

**Andrew Shumway** said that he thought the meeting went really well. He said it was apparent that Officers and Senators were doing great at both hosting and participating in the meetings. He supported the idea that the Senate meetings should have a more realistic timeframe and that the Executive Board should be more honest with Senators about their time commitment. He said it would be more time-efficient to allot more time to agenda items than to continuously extend time during the meeting.

**Andrew Shumway** said that the GPSS has memoranda and Bylaws to specify the process of moving a resolution through GPSS. He said that it is set up that way to give the Senators a chance for deliberation and discussion. He said that if the time for deliberation and discussion was not necessary, then the GPSS should look into amending the Bylaws, or be consistent with following the process outlined in the Bylaws. He said GPSS should not hastily waive a section of the Bylaws just because it finds the Bylaws inconvenient, unless there is a serious, pressing time matter.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the process that GPSS currently follows is written in a memorandum by Michael Diamond about one or two years ago. Logan Jarrell said it provided slightly more leeway than areas in the Bylaws which is why he preferred to use it. He said that it was very detailed and designed with the expectation that resolutions go into second reading. He said it was surprising to him that GPSS had passed two urgent resolutions, but that pushing resolutions directly into second reading was not the general expectation that GPSS should set.

**Aaron Yared** said that the Officers had discussed this issue before. He said that all resolutions must have a two-thirds majority to be expedited into second reading. He said that the Executive Committee could voice its objections, but the Senate ultimately decides whether or not to push a resolution into second reading. He said he understood how one could feel that immediately pushing resolutions into second reading was becoming the norm. He said that the more that this action happened, the more it would give Senators a false understanding of how things are done. He expressed support for Andrew Shumway’s point and welcomed the idea of amending the general process by doing away with the second reading.

**Ashlee Abrantes** asked whether the two-thirds majority was two-thirds of the GPSS Senate population or two-thirds of the meeting attendees who were senators.

**Logan Jarrell** said that all meetings must reach quorum which is one-fourth of the Senate roster. He said that two-thirds of quorum is about thirty members and that resolutions generally pass to second reading almost unanimously.

**Monica Jensen** said that the Executive Committee should not really worry that two resolutions have been pushed quickly through second reading because both had valid reasons for being expedited through the process which were explained by sponsors of the bill. She said that the recent Finance and Budget resolution was not pressured to rush into second reading .

**Julia Overfelt** said she agreed with Monica Jensen and that having Theodore Cohen’s resolution go through at the pace that the Bylaws indicate for a normal resolution will help normalize the process. She said that the Executive Committee should wait and see what happens next quarter to see if this matter is actually an issue and then explain to the GPSS the Executive Committee’s concerns for continuously forcing bills into second reading.

**Genevieve Hulley** said that she heard someone at the meeting explain the normal procedure to new people and that the person planned to object strongly to pushing the resolution to second reading. She said she had a problem with Senators attaching value to resolutions that were pushed immediately through second reading and did not want to promote that mindset. She said that she is okay with GPSS making exceptions to quickly pass some resolutions but that the Executive Board should make the actual process clear.

**Aaron Yared** asked whether any Executive Committee members wanted to discuss working groups.

**Logan Jarrell** said some working groups did not have any attendees.

**Aaron Yared** said that the Executive Committee should come up with new topics as Marty Varela had suggested. He told the Executive Committee members that those who had not had consistent attendance should pick a new topic from the list and send the new topic to Logan so that he could put it in the slides.

**Logan Jarrell** said that someone could make a miscellaneous group because some people may just want to hang out. He said that people may have ideas that don’t fit any of the working group categories, such as help on writing a resolution.

**Julia Overfelt** moved to extend time by two minutes. **Andrew Shumway** seconded. No objections.

**Julia Overfelt** asked how many groups had people and whether the Executive Committee wanted to make more groups. She said it might be more beneficial to try to cluster the existing working group attendees into groups they already like. She said she was open to the idea of making new groups, but that making new groups did not seem necessary.

**Genevieve Hulley** said that she and Hannah Sieben thought that some people could not stay on the Zoom call for various reasons. She asked whether more freedom could be given to the working groups to see if more people would be interested.

**Aaron Yared** said that the decision was up to each working group. He said that working groups could meet at a different time if it was more convenient for the members.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the Slack channel was made to facilitate this collaboration and offered to invite all the Senators to the Slack channel

**Monica Jensen** asked Logan Jarrell to reveal all the available Slack channels.

**Logan Jarrell** said that it was not visually appealing to see a list of all the Slack channels on the sidebar. He said he made a channel list in the help channel.

**Monica Jensen** said that she had to go search for the help channel.

**Logan Jarrell** said that he changed the setting once he became an administrator. He said that all new members would be able to see the help channel upon joining Slack.

# 5. [Action] Senate Agenda 2:18pm

**Logan Jarrell** said that the current agenda was a draft of what he anticipated for the next Senate meeting. He said that the guest speaker would be from the Sustainability Action Plan, not the Washington Student Association (WSA).

**Aaron Yared** said that he was recently in a meeting with Dean Willians and she said that everyone should just accept the current lack of normalcy and try to do less things. He said that some groups would come speak at GPSS meetings, but that GPSS would not have time for every group.

**Andrew Shumway** asked what the Sustainability Action Plan speaker would talk about.

**Aaron Yared** said he was not sure. He said he was planning on having a meeting with the speaker this week to figure it out. He said that Michael Diamond is on the committee which indicated that the committee must be important.

**Genevieve Hulley** said that the Sustainability Action Plan Committee spoke last year.

**Marty Varela** said that the Sustainability Action Plan Committee talked about a tentative directive that set university-wide benchmarks for sustainability. She suggested that the WSA give the Executive Committee a handout to send out to the Senators via email. She said that the Executive Committee should tell the Senators that the WSA would not present this year and encourage Senators to read the information and act on it based on their individual desires.

**Marty Varela** asked how the WSA texted her personal cell phone asking whether she had voted, though she had not given out her number.

**Hannah Sieben** said that she did not know how the WSA had access to student phone numbers. She conjectured that the phone numbers came through the voter registration records with the Washington Bus. She said that she did not think that the phone number was provided through UW because she is not registered to vote in Washington and did not get any texts from the Washington Bus. She explained that the Washington Bus is a civic engagement organization that WSA works with.

**Julia Overfelt** said that the Sustainability Action Plan was an expanded version of the Climate Action Plan. She said that the Sustainability Action Plan had five principles of student learning outcomes, research, impact, diversity, equity, and inclusion, responsible use of resources, and decarbonization of UW energy sources. She said it was a hard plan to enact sustainable practices at UW. She said the plan listed targets from the years 2021 to 2025.

**Britahny Baskin** said she got the same text as Marty Varela did at Mardi Gras. She said that in the past, people from the Union had collected everyone’s phone numbers and had a history of texting people who had expressed political interest.

**Andrew Shumway** asked for five minutes on the Senate Agenda to talk to the Senate about drafting a resolution that the Climate Change Working Group was working on. He said he would solicit feedback about divesting UW from fossil fuels.

**Logan Jarrell** said he anticipated resolutions concerning non-academic seats. He said that they were technically petitions which would be voted on after one reading.

**Aaron Yared** suggested discussing all of the petitions at once and then voting on all of them at once for the sake of efficiency.

**Monica Jensen** said that the petitions for the seats would probably have to be passed individually, but that the discussion regarding the petitions can be held all at once.

*The Senate Agenda was drafted.*

# 6. [Action] Mission, Vision, and Theme 2:32pm

**Aaron Yared** said he sent everyone a copy of the GPSS mission and vision statement a while ago. He said that the Officers came up with the statements at the beginning of the summer and that he wanted to revisit them. He asked whether the Executive Committee wanted to change the mission and vision that was currently on the website to one that the Officers had come up with during the summer. He said he wanted the Executive Committee to vote on finalizing the theme of this year’s GPSS. He said he looked forward to announcing the GPSS theme at the Senate meeting.

*The Officers displayed the mission and theme statement as shown on the website through Zoom.*

**Monica Jensen** asked if GPSS could “advocate for eradication” instead of “advocating to eradicate,” since the latter implied that it was possible for GPSS to fail at eradicating.

**Aaron Yared** said that the mission statement on the website was voted on by the Executive Committee last year. He said that he understood if anyone felt that it was jarring that GPSS was changing its mission statement after two years. He welcomed feedback about this issue.

**Logan Jarrell** said he thought it was fine if “professional development” was dropped from the mission statement.

**Andrew Shumway** said he thought the new mission statement was good. He said he did not feel bad about changing the mission statement since the Executive Committee was full of different people.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the new mission statement frequently emphasized equity. He said that the GPSS structure needed to reflect this emphasis on equity.

**Hannah Sieben** said that she believed GPSS did promote equity through its actions.

**Aaron Yared** said that the Executive Committee had considered creating an amendment to rename the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEI) to the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accountability Committee. He said that the Executive Committee had also discussed changing its structure. He said that the decision to rename and restructure were ultimately up to DEI.

**Julia Overfelt** said that GPSS has to make sure that it is ready to promote inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability. She said that she felt GPSS had made a lot of steps this year.

**Logan Jarrell** asked Aaron Yared if he was willing to open the mission and vision statement to a vote at a Senate meeting or if he was just going to present it after the Executive Committee voted on it.

**Aaron Yared** said he originally thought the same and did not have a problem with opening the vote to the Senate. He said that if the Senate did not like the mission statement, then they should not have it as their mission statement.

**Monica Jensen** asked if the Senate could have an open comment period before Senators had to vote on it. She proposed having the mission statement go through two readings before putting it to a vote. She said it did not matter whether the mission statement was passed at the next meeting or in winter quarter.

**Aaron Yared** asked whether Monica Jensen was saying that the Executive Committees should vote on the mission statement based on the Senate’s comments or whether she wanted the Senators to vote on the mission statement.

**Monica Jensen** said she wanted the Senators to vote on the mission statement at the next Senate meeting.

**Logan Jarrell** suggested that the mission statement be the breakout question for the next Senate meeting.

**Julia Overfelt** said that if the mission statement was the breakout question, then more time should be allotted for breakout rooms in the Senate Agenda. She suggested that the breakout rooms be eight minutes long.

**Aaron Yared** said that the Executive Committee should vote on the theme of Resilience.

**Hannah Sieben** moved to have a roll call vote on the theme of resilience. **Genevieve Hulley** seconded.

***Logan Jarrell*** *voted yes.*

***Monica Jensen*** *voted yes.*

***Genevieve Hully*** *voted yes.*

***Julia Overfelt*** *voted yes.*

***Marty Varela*** *voted yes.*

***Andrew Shumway*** *voted yes.*

***Hannah Sieben*** *voted yes.*

***Antonio Gonzalez*** *abstained.*

***Britahny Baskin*** *voted yes.*

*“Resilience” was established as the theme for this year.*

**Aaron Yared** said that the Senate Agenda would account for some time to report ideas from the breakout rooms regarding the Senators’ thoughts on the mission statement.

**Logan Jarrell** suggested making the breakout rooms item a total of fifteen minutes on the agenda.

# 7. [Action] Solidarity Budget Endorsement 2:50pm

**Logan Jarrell** said that this matter was received through the GPSS email and that he was bringing this issue forward for three reasons. 1) A graduate and professional student had asked the GPSS to pursue the issue; 2) the ASUW Board of Directors are pursuing action on this issue and have asked GPSS to consider action as well; 3) The issue relates to the “Whereas” clause in the first resolution that GPSS passed on October 14 concerning divestment, and the movement for Black lives. He asked everyone to quickly read the document since the GPSS Executive Committee would potentially sign the document. He said that the document had been endorsed by other student groups on campus, including UAW 4121. He said that he believed the Board of Directors were acting on the issue that day.

**Aaron Yared** asked whether Logan Jarrell was asking the Executive Committee to vote on signing the document as the Executive Committee or whether he was asking to bring this forward to the entire Senate.

**Logan Jarrel**l said that it was a time-constrained issue that needed to be voted on that day. He asked everyone if they had any reservations on signing the document.

**Monica Jensen** said she didn’t particularly agree with the statement. She said she could foresee criticism that it was not within the Executive Committee’s role to endorse external political things, but that she thought it was within her role.

**Logan Jarrell** asked if the statement had anything that was egregiously inconsistent with the points made in the GPSS Legislative Agenda. He acknowledged that the Legislative Agenda was designed for state-level lobbying, not local issues.

**Hannah Sieben** corrected that the larger GPSS Legislative Agenda directs city and local level lobbying.

**Aaron Yared** recalled that in a previous year, there had been a lot of discussion surrounding Bill 5395 regarding sex education for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. He said it aimed to teach affirmative consent. He said that some people argued that though the law does not directly involve college students, it affects college students. He said that a lot of graduate and professional students lived in Seattle so local laws do concern GPSS.

**Logan Jarrell** motioned to sign onto the document as the GPSS Executive Committee. **Monica Jensen** seconded. No objections.

*The motion passed and the GPSS Executive Committee signed onto the document.*

# 8. [Information] Joint Resolution Prospect 2:56pm

**Andrew Shumway** said that the Climate Change Working Group was approached by someone from ASUW and invited GPSS to do a joint resolution with ASUW which would call on UW to divest from fossil fuels. He said that UW had already divested from thermal coal, but that there was much more of the fossil fuel industry that the UW could divest itself from. He said that the Climate Change Working Group would work on drafting a resolution with ASUW and planned to have the resolution passed some time in the winter quarter. He said that the Climate Change Working Group was also soliciting feedback at the December 2nd Senate meeting so that everyone could have a chance to give input. Andrew Shumway said that he had been talking to Esaac who is a member of ASUW and the ICA group.

**Logan Jarrell** clarified that the ICA group was formerly known as the Extinction Rebellion at UW. He noted that GPSS did not have a formalized joint resolution process and expressed his interest in the prospect of setting a precedent for the future. He said he was aware that Antonio Gonzalez had been working on formalizing a joint resolution process on the ASUW side. Logan Jarrell expressed his interest in conferring with Antonio Gonzalez regarding the joint resolution. He said that joint resolutions were not prohibited, but a Bylaw should be made describing the process for the passages of one.

**Andrew Shumway** asked everyone to send him an email or a direct message on Slack if they had any input.

# 9. [Information] Announcements 2:59pm

**A.J. Balatico (College of Education)** said he wanted to bring up the issue of the student technology fee and the prospect of suspending the fee. He said that he sent the Executive Committee information about how the level of funding available was enormous compared to demand. He said that the Student Technology Fund (STF) had $8 million sitting around. This meant that the Fund could fund forty proposals of over $200,000 which was unlikely to happen. A.J. Balatico proposed to effectively suspend the student technology fee for the remaining quarters which would be $38 for each student. He said he had issues asking other students about their opinions. He said that as a student of the College of Education, nearly 100% of the people he had talked to said that they considered the fee inequitable since they would not be using this type of funding. He said that the STF Committee would be making a formal vote on Monday and that the only graduate school voting members would be himself and Julia Overfelt. A.J. said that the graduate students he spoke to are vastly in support of suspending the fee, so he wanted to raise the issue with the GPSS Executive Committee.

**Aaron Yared** said that it was an interesting problem because currently people needed technology more than ever. He conceded that some people would prefer to have $30 in their pocket.

**A.J. Balatico (College of Education)** said it is really difficult to conceptualize what $8 million can buy. He said that last year, the fund paid for the continuance of some nodes for the university supercomputer that only benefitted approximately sixty students at the cost of $600,000, which is about sixty out-of-state tuition waivers. He said he could not see the fund being spent in a timely manner where charging the fee would be a rational thing to do. He said that the discussion was difficult to have because the fund could potentially benefit many people in the long term, but even if the Fund spent the money now, items do not get bought until the end of the quarter. Thus, things that are proposed in Fall are available in Winter, and so forth.

**Ashlee Abrantes** asked how suspending the Student Technology Fee would directly impact her. She asked what the proposed time frame of the suspension was

**A.J. Balatico (College of Education)** said he estimated that time frame to be when students were not on campus, so it would be enacted for the winter quarter and potentially in the spring quarter as well. He suspected that the demand for money from the Fund would not exceed $3 million every year, which is how much the STF makes each year.

**Andrew Shumway** asked if suspending the STF would affect block funding.

**A.J. Balatico (College of Education)** said the suspension of the fee would not affect block funding. He said that the STF Committee had even made considerations of how much of the money needed to be used for financial aid. The STF pays about $120,000 for financial aid every year. He said that everything this year was fully funded and that his $8 million figure accounted for the $1 million in block funding. He said that the Student Tech Loan Program already received $400,000. He said that the STF was open to expanding the Student Tech Loan Program, but that there wasn’t much demand and that the Program had a limited space to store laptops. He said that the STF could not fund the storage of the laptops: they could only fund the actual laptops. He also noted that the STF could pay for the development of things, but could not pay for salaries or wages for the continued maintenance of things.

**Andrew Shumway** clarified that the suspension of the STF would not affect the availability of technology to graduate students. He asked what the process to get that fee suspended was and how the Executive Committee could help.

**A.J. Balatico (College of Education)** said that the GPSS Executive Committee could send over an item to the Board of Regents for their meeting on December 9th. He said that Black Friday was the deadline for getting the notice to the Office of Planning and Budget. He asked for more support from other graduate students as there were only two graduate students on the STF Committee. He said he was aware that ASUW and GPSS passed the STF yearly plan and said that some of the numbers that were presented were very off. He said last year was strange for the STF Committee because it rejected most of the larger projects. He asked the Executive Committee to get the information to graduate students, departments, and colleges so that more people would submit proposals for projects.

**A.J. Balatico (College of Education)** acknowledged that a lot of the proposals for remote access to certain technologies, such as lab-based classes, were predominantly coming from STEM departments. He said that the STF had historically funded university-side access to technology or computers for students not in STEM disciplines. He said that due to the pandemic, it seemed that the nonSTEM majors were subsidizing the STEM majors, especially in his discussions with students who are not directly affected by the STF. He said that one of the requirements for the proposals is that it should explain what the receivers of the fund would do if there was no continued funding. He said that most departments had to include a statement of how they were going to maintain equipment if they did not receive additional funds.

**Monica Jensen** asked whether it was possible to include language that referred to the “uncertain times” or something related. She expressed her worry that this precedent would allow for the waiving or reduction of the STF. She asked A.J. Balatico to briefly talk about this concern.

**A.J. Balatico (College of Education)** explained that the suspension of the STF would be done using some of the same language used for the U-PASS suspension. He said that the STF was supposed to be student governed and collected on behalf of the students. He said that the Board of Regents technically do not cancel the fee: ASUW and GPSS do. He said that the Board of Regents directed their administrative units, the Office of Planning and Budgeting, Financial Aid, etc. to collect it on the student’s behalf. He said that the language would reflect the current strange circumstances, but that it would be within ASUW, GPSS, and STF’s duty to reinstate the fee. He said that the fee was historically about forty dollars. He said that the last time it was changed, it was lowered from $44down to $38 by the STF. He said that the other alternative to cancelling the fee would be to adjust the fee, which he did not favor. He said he would work to suspend the fee until the majority of the student population returned to campus and that the reinstatement language would reflect that it was a joint decision between ASUW and GPSS.

**Logan Jarrell** asked what A.J. Balatico would need from GPSS if the STF Committee voted in favor of suspending the fee for the duration that A.J. Balatico had specified.

**A.J. Balatico (College of Education)** said that there may be things related to changes in the yearly plan, so he would like if GPSS disseminated the plan for what to do next. He said the STF Committee needed more proposals to allow the Committee to do its job. He also said that the Committee was trying to increase its graduate student representation. He said that the STF Board was predominantly undergraduates. He asked the Executive Committee to talk about how to fund certain projects that were not specific to research. He called on the need for broader discussions about how to have research opportunities that are not necessarily funded but are available for students to explore. Otherwise, the STF Fund seems to favor graduate students and does not seem to enhance the student experience. He said that in discussions with the previous Treasurer Shane Schrader, the STF Committee would discuss how the STF enhanced the student experience and adjust its approach accordingly. He said that the proposals would be split between graduate and undergraduate students to be fair.

**Rene Singleton** said that to change the fee, a motion or resolution would need to be made by ASUW, the Board of Directors, and the GPSS Executive Committee. She said that the statutes outlined how the motion or resolution needed to be made, but the motion or resolution must be joined from both bodies and can then be submitted to the Board of Regents. She suggested that the Executive Committee look at the language of the statues. She said that it was codified and outlined inside of the RCW and stressed that it needed to be joint.

**A.J. Balatico (College of Education)** thanked the Executive Committee for their time.

# 10. [Action] Adjournment 3:18pm

**Logan Jarrell** moved to adjourn the meeting. **Andrew Shumway** seconded.

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