GPSS Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 6th 2021, 5:30 pm 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 5:33pm

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

# 2. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 5:33pm

**Hannah Sieben** moved to approve the agenda. **Marty Varela** seconded. No objections.

# 3. [Action] Approval of the Minutes 5:33pm

**Marty Varela** moved to approve the agenda. **Logan Jarrell** seconded. No objections.

# 4. [Action] Senate Meeting Agenda 5:33pm

**Aaron Yared** asked whether anyone was aware of any willing guest speakers. He asked whether it was possible to invite the Washington Student Association (WSA) to speak at the first Senate meeting.

**Hannah Sieben** said that it was not a good time to ask the WSA to speak until Spring quarter. She said that her own participation in Senate meetings would also drop because the legislative session started on Monday.

**Aaron Yared** said it was possible to not have a speaker for the first Senate meeting.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the Senate would meet without business if there was no speaker. He suggested canceling the meeting.

**Andrew Shumway** asked what it meant to meet without business.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the Senate would do a land acknowledgment, participate in breakout rooms and then adjourn.

**Andrew Shumway** said he was going to do a first reading of the Fossil Fuel Divestment Resolution.

**Aaron Yared** offered to ask Dean Williamson-Lott if she was willing to come and speak. He said that she told him she was willing to come speak. He said that the only problem he foresaw was that it would be at very short notice for her.

**Bill Mahoney** agreed that it was short notice. He said that both the Dean and her partner were faculty members with young children so it could be difficult for her to find time in the evening to speak to GPSS.

**Logan Jarrell** asked whether there was anyone from the Faculty Senate that would be interested in speaking to GPSS.

**Aaron Yared** suggested Robin Angotti, the chair of the Faculty Senate, but said that it would still be short notice.

**Marty Varela** asked if there was anyone from Student Wellness Services that could be available. She said that the start to the year had been a little bit more energetic than she had anticipated. She said she imagined that there might be other people who felt the same way and proposed giving a reminder via GPSS that there are resources available through the university. She said that the Student Wellness Services would be likely to have quick availability with short notice as well.

**Ashlee Abrantes** said that she could ask someone at the counseling center like Dr. Natacha Foo Kune.

**Marty Varela** said it would be nice to fill the time with something on a broader spectrum. She said she had a tough time trying to stay focused and engaged at the beginning of this quarter, especially because she hated Zoom.

**Aaron Yared** said it was possible to get someone from LiveWell.

**Hannah Sieben** referred to a handout that she found interesting. She said she had never heard of LiveWell and said that it was a resource specific to graduate students that provided mental health services and emergency services for mental health. She suggested publicizing the resource on the GPSS intro slide.

**Bill Mahoney** asked whether everyone had heard about My SSP, the student support program. He advised the Executive Committee to let Senators know that it was a free resource for everyone at the UW. He said that the university was advertising it as a resource for undergraduate and graduate students, but he said that anybody with a UW affiliation was welcome. He encouraged everyone to share the resource with postdoctoral fellows and faculty members as well.

**Genevieve Hulley** said that Patricia Atwater, Director of Health Promotion at University of Washington, could be an appropriate speaker. She said that Patricia Atwater was at the Resource Fair and had never spoken to the Senate before. She said that she did not know what Patricia Atwater’s schedule was like but that Patricia Atwater had information about most of the mental health resources and was a part of LiveWell and Hall Health. Genevieve Hulley said that Patricia Atwater responded quickly but may not be available.

**Marty Varela** suggested asking all of the aforementioned people and simply cutting the speaking time if multiple people agreed to speak. She said she would rather have too many resources available to people than not enough.

**Logan Jarrell** said that some of the speakers could be invited later in the quarter as well.

**Genevieve Hulley** suggested contacting Dr. Lili Church, Director of Hall Health, first and then Patricia Atwater second.

**Aaron Yared** said he planned to give each speaker ten minutes.

**Marty Varela** suggested that five of the ten minutes allotted to each speaker be reserved for questions since the Senators always had questions.

**Aaron Yared** asked whether the speakers should get ten minutes to speak and have extra time for questions or use part of the ten minutes for questions.

**Julia Overfelt** asked whether each speaker could be allotted fifteen minutes given the shortness of the current agenda. She said that even if people extended time, the Senate meeting would be less than an hour and a half.

**Aaron Yared** said that the two speakers would tentatively be Dr’s. Natacha Foo Kune and Lili Church.

**Logan Jarrell** asked whether the speakers should be grouped as one, thirty minute agenda item or whether the speakers should each have their own agenda item.

**Marty Varela** asked how the presenters would feel about being represented as a pair as opposed to being represented separately on the agenda.

**Aaron Yared** said that the speakers should be separated so that one person does not accidentally take up the lion’s share of the time.

**Ashlee Abrantes** said that the speakers had presented several times together and knew how to piggyback off of one another.

**Andrew Shumway** said that he planned to bring the first draft of the Fossil Fuel Divestment Resolution to the Senate in next week’s meeting and follow up with a second reading the following Senate meeting. He said he did not anticipate a lot of amendments because the Climate Change Working Group had been very open about the process and had solicited many opinions. Andrew Shumway asked whether first readings were considered information items or action items.

**Logan Jarrell** said first readings should always be action items as resolutions could be sent to a particular committee or other actions were done to modify the resolution.

**Aaron Yared** asked what the breakout room discussion should be.

**Julia Overfelt** said that if the question was New Year’s-themed, then people could share their New Year’s resolutions.

**Aaron Yared** said that the questions would be “How was your break?” and “What are your priorities for this year?” He asked where the item “Winter Working Groups” should be placed on the agenda. He said he thought it should happen earlier in the meeting but did not want Senators to be distracted while the speakers were speaking.

**Hannah Sieben** said that people were more likely to give an honest answer if the item was near the end of the meeting. She asked if the Executive Committee wanted to host working groups after the first Senate meeting.

**Julia Overfelt** said she liked putting working groups at the end of the meeting because it was something interactive to look forward to during the meeting.

**Genevieve Hulley** suggested that the Senate devote time to discussing white supremacy in America due to the recent events.

**Marty Varela** supported the idea about being direct and having the conversation, instead of hiding from the issue. She said people will have been made aware of the issues prior to the presentation on UW mental health resources. She wondered if the Executive Committee had one or more people that felt confident hosting that kind of exchange or facilitating that type of conversation as it required skills. She noted that it was especially difficult hosting an open exchange on a virtual platform because the facilitator needed to recognize when people want to contribute, ask a question or make a comment, and provide value for everyone without one person dominating the time.

**Rene Singleton** asked whether it would be helpful for the Executive Committee to ask people if they were interested in engaging in such a topic on Zoom and then seek the right type of facilitator. She said that the Senate was a diverse group of people that could have connections to people in Olympia and DC. She advised the Committee to take a step back and first get help from a skilled facilitator because she was unsure of how the Committee could simultaneously comfort and engage people.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the previous Free Speech Forum during the Fall quarter that was jointly hosted by GPSS, The Daily, and ASUW went well. He said that this was potentially an opportunity for the GPSS to work with those partners, again, because the current events affected everyone, not just graduate and professional students.

**Genevieve Hulley** shared that Wa Na Wari was a community-focused group which could be an interesting resource that the GPSS could partner with for an event.

**Marty Varela** said that she anticipated more chaos between now and the next Senate meeting, especially before the 20th of January. She said that whether the GPSS collaborated with The Daily and made another successful event or work with Wa Na Wari, it would turn out great. She said it would be opportune to tell the Senators about it after presentations from the wellness speakers.

**Aaron Yared** said this was something that the Executive Committee could work on outside of the meeting. Aaron Yared said he anticipated that students would also ask about the current state of UWPD and what steps had been taken. He said a lot of students were starting to show their dissatisfaction because they were not seeing any real change and said he would plan to look into the matter this week.

**Julia Overfelt** suggested that the land acknowledgment also include an acknowledgment of the current events.

**Aaron Yared** volunteered to make a statement acknowledging the current events.

**Marty Varela** asked whether Hannah Sieben would announce that the legislative session commences two days before the Senate meeting and that she would be actively engaged in legislative activities. Marty Varela said that Hannah Sieben could say that she would appreciate quick responses and support from members in the event that she reaches out because she would only do it if absolutely necessary.

**Hannah Sieben** expressed support for that idea. She said she would make the announcement during the Officer Announcement item. She said she was hoping to pick out a date for Lobby Day soon. She said Lobby Day would happen around mid-February.

**Aaron Yared** said that the Executive Committee could also share the link for the survey that Hannah Sieben wanted to send out in addition to the newsletter. He took full responsibility for not sending it out sooner.

**Hannah Sieben** said it was not too late to send out a “Welcome back to Winter quarter” email.

**Genevieve Hulley** said that Shysta Pandey, the GPSS Director of Communications, would send out an all-campus email next week. She said that her team would talk to the Officers about it on Friday.

**Marty Varela** moved to approve the agenda. **Terrence Pope** seconded. No objections.

# 5. [Information] Constitution and Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee 6:05pm

**Logan Jarrel**l said that he and the other Officers had discussed several areas of the Bylaws and some of the implications of the Constitution that they were not entirely satisfied with. He said that some parts of the Constitution had a memorandum that elaborated the rules better. He said that the Officers had an idea of creating a temporary committee that would last through the end of the year which would seek to remedy the weak points in the Constitution rather than having several efforts do it or give the task to certain committees, especially committees who already had a lot of tasks, like the Equity and Accountability Committee.

**Logan Jarrell** asked whether such a committee should exist. He said that the committee should have some at-large Senators but should also feature some more prominent GPSS leadership like Executive Committee members or certain committee chairs. He asked the Executive Committee whether this was a good idea and, if so, who should be on this committee and what it should be tasked with.

**Andrew Shumway** said he thought it was a good idea. He said that some areas of the Bylaws needed to be tidied and that he had some recommendations leftover from last year's Elections Committee. He said that there were large holes in the GPSS election process that need to be patched up. He said that the plans to patch up the Bylaws were abandoned when the pandemic happened since the Executive Committee spent most of its time focusing on addressing the pandemic. He said that if this committee were created, he would like to provide it feedback.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the Executive Committee had information from Elections Committees that could be incorporated into this effort. He said that it was enough work for an ad hoc committee.

**Marty Varela** expressed her support for the idea and said that the committee should have representation from the Elections Committee and the Judicial committee. She said that there should be at-large Senators, at least one Officer, and at least one Executive Senator.

**Logan Jarrell** referred to Rene Singleton’s question and said that the purpose of the committee would be to propose revisions of the Bylaws and Constitution. He said that the revisions would be subject to review by the Elections Committee because the revisions were technically amendments. He agreed with Marty Varela that the Judicial Committee should have representation. He said that the purpose of the Judicial Committee was not necessarily to make the amendments, but that they had the right to review any sort of change. He said that the new committee would not override the Judicial Committee’s power.

**Aaron Yared** expressed support for Marty Varela’s suggestion on how to compose the committee.

**Logan Jarrell** said that he would appreciate it if anyone helped him make the ad hoc committee memorandum.

**Aaron Yared** said he was willing to help Logan Jarell. He said that Ashlee Abrantes was also willing to help.

**Logan Jarrell** said that ideally, by the second Senate meeting, the Executive Committee could have the ad hoc committee ready for people to get involved.

# 6. [Information] Announcements 6:11pm

**Hannah Sieben** asked whether it was possible for her to not lead working groups this quarter since her time was filled with legislative efforts. She said that she still would attend Senate meetings. She said that she had decided to be a full time student this quarter which was not always the case for people in her position.

**Marty Varela** advised Hannah Sieben to plan for the worst. She said that Hannah Sieben should be conservative with committing her time because unpredictable events could happen both academically and legislatively that would take up her time. She also advised Hannah Sieben to identify two or three people who could serve as her proxy for Senate meetings just in case she could not make it to a Senate meeting. She said that the proxies could update Hannah Sieben on what happened during the Senate meeting, host the working group, and deliver messages to the Senate on her behalf.

**Julia Overfelt** said that the Senate should not plan on Hannah Sieben’s presence any more than if she were to be physically in Olympia. She said that the pandemic was not an excuse to expect more of people’s time. She said that this year’s Executive Committee could suggest that next year’s Committee figure out the expectations for the Vice President of External Affairs (VPE) role going forward. She said that for this year, the Committee should essentially assume that Hannah Sieben’s workload and involvement with the Senate would be the same as what they expected from Maggie Dunham Jordahl last year.

**Aaron Yared** said that he believed that the Bylaws stated that it was the Policy Director’s responsibility to fill in for the VPE when the VPE was busy with commitments in Olympia. He said that last year, he was the one who picked up the slack whenever Maggie Dunham Jordahl was in Olympia. He said that Hannah Sieben could have either her organizing director or policy director fill in for her or have them alternate between themselves or appoint someone from the Legislative Advisory Board to stand in for her. He said that working groups were important, but that the Senate needed her to fulfill her role as the VPE while maintaining good academic standing because she was a student first.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the Senate handbook was in the process of being updated. He said he had intended to finish it earlier but restarted halfway through. He said that the Senate roster would be posted on the website by end of the week. He said that the Senate roster was a culmination of a lot of work by his team and others.

**Marty Varela** asked where Monica Jensen and Britahny Baskin were and whether they were okay.

**Logan Jarrell** said that only Antonio Gonzalez reached out in advance about his absence from today’s meeting.

**Marty Varela** said she would reach out to Monica Jensen and Britahny Baskin.

**Julia Overfelt** said that she would reach out to Monica Jensen, too.

**Logan Jarrell** asked everyone to prioritize their health.

**Bill Mahoney** seconded Logan Jarrell’s opinion. He invited everyone to schedule a one-on-one with him if they needed to talk through things.

# 7. [Action] Adjournment 6:19pm

**Terrence Pope** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Logan Jarrell** seconded. No objections.

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