GPSS Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 3rd 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 Jules 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 5:34pm

**Logan Jarrell** moved to approve the agenda. **Andrew Shumway** seconded. No objections.

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

**Aaron Yared** said that there were three minutes to approve: those from January 20th of 2021, and June 3rd and May 27th of 2020.

**Logan Jarrell** said that one of the minutes from last year was for an Executive Committee meeting. He noted that the Executive Committee technically never ceases to be, but that the Senate technically dissolved every summer. He said that the Executive Committee reserved the right to approve older minutes retroactively.

**Monica Jensen** moved to approve the minutes. Britahny Baskinseconded.

**Logan Jarrell** objected on the grounds that he referred to the SVA as Student Veteran Affairs last week. He said that SVA actually stood for the Student Veteran’s Association and would be corrected.

**Logan Jarrell** withdrew his objection

No other objections.

# 4. [Information] Learning Accessibility Discussion 5:36pm

**Logan Jarrell** clarified that Marty Varela was the sponsor for the presence of the Senators.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** introduced Distance Learning Now, an initiative that was started by a GPSS Senator and a former Director of the Student Disability Commission (SDC). He said that Distance Learning Now was a student campaign. He said that he would talk about what it is, who it benefits, and how they would make change.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said that Distance Learning Now began as a collaboration between Senator Brittany Bishop and former SDC Director Ashley D’Ambrosio. He said that it focused on expanding and improving the utilization of lecture capture services such as Panopto to allow students to attend courses they would otherwise have to miss, engage in programs which might otherwise be inaccessible, and review material to support their own learning trajectory. He said he wanted to focus on the students who benefit from the program: students who commute, students who work, students who are caregivers, and students who are caught up in emergencies, etc. He referred to three testimonies and read a quote:

“It is an invaluable tool for me because I can review in-class lectures with slide presentations and student questions and comments several times. This helps me understand the lecture content because my auditory comprehension and processing is in the second and third percentiles. I understand so much more when I can go back over the lectures three or four times.”

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said that a different disabled-identifying student shared how access to remote lectures allowed them to go to eating disorder treatment. The person was able to access the inpatient treatment they needed without sacrificing their education. He pointed out the fact that fewer than 35% of students with disabilities who enroll in a four-year college degree graduate with eight years and noted that it was double the standard timeline. He highlighted that for people with a psychiatric disability, the number dropped to 14%. He said that the only numbers he could find pertained to undergraduate students, but that chronic illnesses were not more predictable after receiving a diploma. He said that mental health does not always immediately stabilize after receiving a diploma, so it was reasonable to assume that graduate students were facing similar challenges.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** also said he had a quote from a current graduate student talking about how taking the bus to school takes two hours out of their day. He explained that the student could not afford to drive the car they had because of the cost of parking on campus. Malikai Bass (Museology) explained that the student would have had to work more to earn the money or take the bus which caused a burden for their family. He noted that two hours a day was a lot of time to be wasted under a graduate school course load.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** hoped that everyone was currently experiencing the finest remote learning UW has to offer. He said that the online infrastructure was huge: prior to COVID, only about thirty classrooms were physically equipped to offer distance learning. He said that the university had generated the infrastructure and support needed for professors to know how to use Panopto. He said that the students needed to make sure that it did not go away post-COVID because not everyone would be able to return to the campus. He presented a list of recommendations that he gathered while working with the SDC.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said that the first recommendation was to establish a process by which faculty could indicate if their course was distance accessible. He said that this was a gap step before getting all courses accessible. He said it was possible that not all professors would be on board, but that this rule would allow students who know their own needs to look for classes that would be able to meet those needs. He said the second recommendation was to provide funds to support professors in developing the distance learning materials and infrastructure they need. He said that COVID had not provided the ideal infrastructure for all classes and there might still be gaps to fill. The third recommendation was to provide more training for staff and faculty on how to use distance learning supports such as the automatic captioning in Zoom, which, despite being provided to everyone, was only utilized by a few people. The fourth recommendation was to establish a task force to make sure that the university was efficiently utilizing the technologies so that students met their desired learning outcomes. The fifth recommendation was to develop a plan for the installation and maintenance of lecture capture technologies in all classrooms. Malikai Bass noted that a few rooms, mostly in STEM buildings, were already equipped with this technology. He said that this technology allowed professors to automatically capture their lectures, including slides as well as audio and visual material.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** introduced the last recommendation as lobbying the Washington State Legislature to conduct an audit on lecture capture technologies across the state’s public higher education institutions to determine their efficacy and improve learning outcomes. He said that this recommendation had the largest potential for the GPSS to make an impact and that students could recognize their privilege attending a strong university and see how they could advocate for accessibility across the state.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** put a [link](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1b9SmHvPkSsafl-PwcLL1Z3ddmbqT_zmO_G35PXj9bCk/edit) to step-by-step instructions for enabling live captioning on meeting in the chat. He credited an undergraduate named Toby and explained that the steps also outlined how to make Zoom meetings more accessible for deaf and hard of hearing students at university, as well as anyone else.

**Logan Jarrell** said he would use the guide to make the upcoming GPSS meetings more accessible. He asked whether Distance Learning Now collaborated with the ASUW Office of Inclusive Design.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said he believed so. He said that he pulled a lot of information from the SDC. He said that Distance Learning Now was one of their initiatives and that he was working with them on a couple of other projects. He said that he saw this initiative in *The Daily* last Wednesday and thought that it was a great initiative for GPSS to join. He said that the longer proposal mentioned five or six different offices that were working on the initiative and said he thought that one of them was related to inclusive design. He encouraged everyone to share the document with everyone.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** raised a point of information. He referred to the [link](https://asuwsdc1.wixsite.com/cripstudentprograms/asuw-office-of-inclusive-design) he had posted in the chat and said that the Office of Inclusive Design had not yet been funded.

**Monica Jensen** asked Malikai Bass (Museology) to go back to the slide of recommendations.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** addressed Alexander Novokhodko and said that the link was from an initiative that just started. She said that there was an existing office that was similar but was not centered around disability services. She said that the initiative was going to launch in the 2021 academic year.

**Janis Shin** commented that the third recommendation, “Provide training for staff and faculty on how to utilize distance learning supports,” was especially pertinent to graduate students because graduate students often acted as tech support for professors. She expressed her support of having more faculty learn to use distance learning tools.

**Aaron Yared** explained that during President Cauce’s discussion with Provost Richards, the administration said that they were not seeing an increase in dropout rates during quarantine. He said he believed the point to be a strawman argument and asked Malikai Bass if he had any specific data.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said he did not have that data but felt that the Disability Resource Center could provide that sort of data. He said that the data he had was based on a survey of 120 students, some of whom were graduate students. He said that 86% reported positive experiences with Panopto technology. He said he would share a link to the data from the survey.

**Britahny Baskin** referred to Aaron Yared’s statement about how the administration was not seeing any increases in dropouts and wondered if anyone was looking at whether there had been increases in people taking a quarter off. She said that her department had had that situation.

**Aaron Yared** said that President Cauce said there was not a significant increase in the normal amount of students who dropped out from quarter to quarter. He said that it was still too soon to tell whether the students who dropped out for a quarter fully dropped out of school.

**Britahny Baskin** said it was obvious that the initiative was most important for student learning and that the GPSS should back any initiative that promotes student learning. She said that in order to sell the initiative to the administration, one could say that learning technologies would help recruit people during the pandemic, so it would increase accessibility across a wide range of things.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said he would share some stories from his constituents that pertained to what was being discussed today. He said that his department’s student group Mechanical Engineering department's Graduate student Association (MEGA) performed a survey of its students and the most commonly mentioned accessibility need was the captioning. He said the second most common accessibility need was scanned documents. He said that a MEGA member brought up that scanned documents could not be read by screen readers whereas properly tagged PDFs could.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said he had collected student stories pertaining to accessibility for a while for the Legislative Advisory Board’s one-pager on accessibility. He said that the main story he wanted to share was from Anne Ross. He said that Annie Ross said that Interfolio, the UW job’s portal intake, destroys metadata for accessible PDFs; in other words, submitting a properly tagged, screen reader accessible PDF to Interfolio resulted in a file that a screen reader could not read. He noted that it was reported as a bug to the company that ran Interfolio. He said that Anne Ross raised the question of how the university assessed the software it purchased for accessibility if it assessed software for accessibility at all. He said it would be nice to know what the process was like so that the Student Technology Fee (STF) Committee could replicate it since it bought a lot of software. He said that if the UW did not have a metric for measuring software accessibility, then it should develop one.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that the other student stories he collected were largely about physically inaccessible buildings. He said that he had a couple of stories where people on crutches found out that they could not navigate their lab space while injured because their lab was located in an old building where the finding that they couldn't navigate their lab space, while they had that injury because it was in an old building where the interior was inaccessible due to pipes or other physical obstacles. He said that these stories could be found in the one-pager that the LAB had sent to legislators.

**Aaron Yared** said that the university’s administration’s capitol request list included requests for money and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. He acknowledged that the building had been around for so long that acting on these issues now was unacceptable.

**Ashlee Abrantes** said she could not get an answer on university software evaluation processes, so software ADA compliance was the top line that graduate students put forth as their problem issue in a communication that was delivered to the provost.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** credited the UW administration for drafting a lobbying document. He said that MEGA had met with the Facilities Department who were quite interested in a lot of points that the MEGA members raised. He said that one specific pain point for people in the Mechanical Engineering Department was the Engineering Annex. He said that the problem may be resolved soon and if the group receives a new space in the new interdisciplinary engineering building if it was funded and built. He said that the new interdisciplinary engineering building would be a more accessible space. He noted that Anderson Hall was also hard to access and it was on the administration’s list.

**Logan Jarrell** moved to extend time by two minutes. **Andrew Shumway** seconded. No objections.

**Yash Raj Sinha** spoke on behalf of the STF Committee. He said that as part of the vetting process for submitted proposals, especially for physical equipment that groups might want to be installed on campus, the Committee makes sure that access to the equipment is ADA compliant and accessible to as many students as possible. He said that software was harder to assess because accessibility is usually determined by third party software that groups bring in. He said he would take the suggestion back to the Committee and create a process of evaluating software proposals to make sure that the software was more compliant.

**Kelly Mack** said that she was a student who needed remote access, just as Malikai Bass mentioned earlier. She said she often heard faculty give the excuse that recording lectures encouraged students to stop coming to class. She said this rationale was problematic logic because it only considered the students who had the privilege to choose whether or not to attend class over the disabled students who needed the recording to access their education.

**Abbie Shew** mentioned that if anyone was interested in having their testimony being used in legislative meetings, she had put the [link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/13ktRZsG0xaVlpVbexgDkxxB_MkGm7VMCB7ot5Jbhi8k/edit) in the chat to a Google form created for collecting student stories. She said students could add comments in the form and either be named or anonymous and that the Legislative Advisory Board could use the comment in its advocacy efforts.

**Aaron Yared** said that President Cauce sent all student government presidents a study she came across after she and they discussed accessibility. She said that the study was about distance learning, specifically lecture capture. She said that the two main conclusions of the study were that students think that lecture capture is super helpful and improves their academics while faculty and staff were worried that lecture recordings would cause attendance to drop. He said that it did not make a lot of sense and that the faculty members were making a crazy assumption. He said that since the students paid for their education, it was ridiculous for faculty to think that students would not show up to class.

**Monica Jensen** moved to extend time by two minutes. **Andrew Shumway** seconded. No objections.

**Monica Jensen** said that the Linguistics Department had a masters program that was entirely accessible online. She said the masters program was how the Linguistics Department funded its PhD program. She admitted that the degree was a masters in computer science so the professors might be more technologically literate. She said that all the courses were accessible in the masters and PhD programs. She said it was doable for professors and that the administration could charge tuition to more people.

**Aaron Yared** asked Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) in regards to the Interfolio bug whether the bug had come up during an update or whether it was designed that way.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that all he knew was that Anne Ross, a friend of one of his constituents, was a graduate instructor who found UW’s hiring system ceases to make PDFs accessible and submitted a bug report to Interfolio.

**Aaron Yared** said Anne Ross also sent him an email. He said Alexander Novokhodko also made a good point and that there were still questions that needed to be answered. He said that a great discussion had transpired and that the GPSS could present the provost with concrete solution proposals and questions. He thanked everyone for their testimony. He said that he hoped that the GPSS could show progress for these issues soon.

# 5. [Action] STF Reductions 6:06pm

**Yash Raj Sinha** said that the STF Committee voted last quarter to reduce the student technology fee to $0 for the next two quarters which included the spring and summer quarter of 2021. He said a lot of the equipment, technology, and spaces that the school supported on campus were restricted and inaccessible to many students. He said that the Committee did not want to charge students if there were not any projects on campus that students could access. He added that the STF Committee reserves budget had built up over the past decade, giving them an opportunity to use those funds in the next two quarters while not collecting revenue and reducing the budget while continuing to support projects. He said that the STF Committee had been trying to expand its outreach program to encourage more proposal submissions and spending on student projects.

**Yash Raj Sinha** said that the STF Committee wanted to make sure that some conditions were satisfied before recommendations to the Board of Regents were approved. He said that the STF Committee wanted to reinstate the fee at the start of the next academic year. He said that they would have about $6.8 million left from this fiscal year without having collected any revenue from the spring or summer quarter of the year 2021.

**Yash Raj Sinha** said that the STF Committee was projected to spend at least $2 million on projects submitted this quarter and the spring. He noted that spring quarter was usually the STF Committee’s busiest quarter. He said that they expected to enter the next fiscal year with $4.8 million, based on a conservative estimate. He said that the STF Committee might spend more than $2 million in the next two quarters and have about $4 or $5 million going into the next fiscal year. He said that the STF Committee still had an operating amount that could be allocated to its fixed cost. He said that one of the most important conditions the STF Committee had in its recommendations was fixed costs, including all of its block programs and financial aid contribution. He said that they kept the financial aid contribution the same as last year’s because it was a percent of the STF Committee’s revenue and the STF Committee wanted to make sure that it could still satisfy the commitment while suspending revenue collection. He said that the STF Committee had its admin budget and special projects budget allocated for next year so its fixed costs had been accounted for. He said he added a statement about a future Committee in the fall of 2021: if the pandemic restrictions were still in force and people were still unable to access the campus, then they could vote to keep the fee at $0. He said that the current recommendation was to reinstate the fee at $38.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that he served on the STF Committee from 2017 to 2018. He said he was aware of a lot of what had been discussed like the surplus, which existed back then as well. He said that when he had been on the Committee, they had hired a full-time accountant with a full-time salary. He asked how difficult it would be to get a similar staff member to do an accessibility evaluation for the Committee. He noted that the STF Committee bought a lot of software, including UDrive, which was available to every student at UW. He suggested that the STF Committee hire a professional to help improve the accessibility of the software that the STF Committee buys instead of lowering or removing the fee for a few quarters since the fee was such a tiny percentage of students’ tuition burden.

**Yash Raj Sinha** said that instead of using the forgotten money for the position, the Committee could move forward with the recommendation and incorporate a position that was comparable to the accountant position created two years ago. He said that the accountant had a contract with the HUB in addition to having a contract with the STF Committee, so the accountant’s time was split between serving both entities. He expressed support for Alexander Novokhodko’s idea of hiring a professional to assess accessibility for potential purchases. He said that it would be very useful to the Committee and would raise the point at the next Committee discussion.

**Andrew Shumway** referred to Yash Raj Sinha’s point that the STF Committee was looking to spend about $2 million over the next two quarters. He asked whether that number was based on recovered estimates or based on numbers from the previous spring and summer quarter. He said he was looking through his notes from the last meeting that Yash Raj Sinha had presented to the GPSS Executive Committee and noted that Yash Raj Sinha said that the number of proposals went down from fifty-one proposals in the spring of 2019 to ten proposals in the spring of 2020. He asked whether the drop in proposals was accounted for and what the STF Committee expected to spend over the next two quarters.

**Yash Raj Sinha** said that the spring of 2020 was special because of the Open Public Meetings Act change, which restricted the STF Committee to only funding proposals related to COVID relief. He said that was the big factor for the drop in proposals as well as a general lack of demand for in-person technology since not many people were on campus. He said that compared to a year ago, during winter 2021, the STF Committee received ten more proposals than it did last year. He said that the spring quarter was normally the Committee’s busiest quarter because that was when groups were looking to start new projects. He said that he thought $2 million was a pretty accurate estimate based on the given situation.

**Aaron Yared** asked whether the STF Committee had *ex officio* members from the Facilities Department.

**Yash Raj Sinha** said he was not sure of Facilities specifically, but that the STC had three *ex officio* positions, one for UW IT, one for UW Libraries, and another group that he could not recall at the moment.

**Aaron Yared** said he used to be the STF Committee Chair at UW Bothell. He said that the UW Bothell STF Committee had many *ex officio* members, including one from the Facilities Department. He wondered if the solution was, instead of hiring an accessibility expert, to have someone from the Disability Resource Services serve as an *ex officio* member.

**Yash Raj Sinha** thanked Aaron Yared for the suggestion. He said that the STF Committee had a vacant spot on the STF for an ex officio member for about a year and a half.

**Andrew Shumway** said that he appreciated that Yash Raj Sinha included a paragraph about considering the reduction for the fall of 2021 if the pandemic was not over then. He said that the GPSS should have done something sooner, prior to the current quarter as well. He said it was an unnecessary burden for students to pay tuition that would not be spent. He said he had questions about this during the fall meeting.

**Aaron Yared** noted that the GPSS had voted to approve of the reduction in the fall quarter. He said that the Board of Regents were the ones who did not allow it to pass, which he noted was weird since the Board of Regents had invited all the student body presidents to speak to them with the extra time they had at the end of their Board meeting.

**Yash Raj Sinha** said that by the time the STF Committee had come to a decision and finalized the process, the Board of Regents deadline had already passed for approving anything for the winter quarter. He said it was unfortunate since the STF Committee tried to help the students in a small way, as well as help with their internal operations.

**Andrew Shumway** asked whether the STF Committee was on the agenda for the Board of Regents or if the STF Committee had to submit something to be placed on the agenda. He said he heard that there was quite a large backlog of submitting something to the Board of Regents versus when a person actually got to speak at a Board of Regents meeting. He said he wanted to make sure that the approval of the STF reduction would actually happen before spring quarter.

**Yash Raj Sinha** said that the Board of Regents had given him a lot of deadlines that the STF Committee was able to meet. He said that the Committee submitted the required material and that the Board had had a chance to look at the final draft of recommendations and finalize it for their meeting. He said that after this meeting, he would let the Board know that the draft was officially approved by the GPSS which would allow the Board to post it to its website tomorrow. He said he was ready for the meeting next week.

**Logan Jarrell** moved to approve the Student Tech Fee Committee’s proposed recommendation regarding the fee. **Britahny Baskin** seconded. No objections.

**Yash Raj Sinha** thanked everyone and asked Aaron Yared for official documentation about the approval.

# 6. [Action] Senate Meeting Agenda 6:20pm

**Aaron Yared** said he invited Dean Williamson-Lott to the Senate Meeting on February 24th. He said that the GPSS did not have a speaker for the upcoming meeting. He said that if the GPSS did not have any resolutions to pass either, then there would be no business for the meeting.

**Monica Jensen** asked Ashlee Abrantes and Aaron Yared about the survey on how people felt about coming back to campus in person.

**Aaron Yared** said that the last time he brought up the topic to the Executive Committee, the general sentiment was that it was still a little too early to ask. He said it was something that he and Ashlee Abrantes still wanted to do and that Ashlee had been working on the survey.

**Genevieve Hulley** asked if the Executive Committee had brainstormed possible guest speakers two weeks ago.

**Aaron Yared** said that while the Executive Committee discussed potential speakers, no invitations had been extended. He said he was willing to send an invitation to a specific speaker if the Committee wanted him to. He offered to contact the Faculty Senate Robin Angotti. He said he was not sure whether Robin Angotti would be able to meet at such short notice. He said that the issue was that a week was not enough advance notice for most people.

**Logan Jarrell** suggested asking UAW 4121. He said it was relevant since the union was advancing to the next stage of their bargaining period. He said that they had preplanned presentations that they could quickly adapt to the context of a GPSS meeting.

**Genevieve Hulley** said that the union had been contacting her and that it was a critical moment for them. She recently realized she was not a member of the union. She said there were probably other people in the same position who were not part of the union but willing to help and expressed support for Logan Jarrell’s idea.

**Logan Jarrell** acknowledged Jules Overfelt’s suggestion about the library. He agreed with Genevieve Hulley about the urgency of the union.

**Andrew Shumway** asked whether the GPSS was allowed to meet if it did not have any business. He said that the Executive Committee should first determine if there were any action items before trying to find a speaker.

**Logan Jarrell** said that having a speaker could be sufficient for business, even though it was an information item.

**Rene Singleton** said that the Executive Committee was struggling to find agenda items for people. She said it was fine to give people a day off and not meet. She said it would be mindful of people’s time to cancel the meeting.

**Aaron Yared** said he was unaware whether Logan Jarrell had made any progress on the Bylaw amendments, but the next week would be an opportunity to work on it.

**Logan Jarrell** said that per procedure, any sort of amendment would need to be submitted ten days in advance to the Elections Committee. He said that he could write a Bylaw Amendment and submit it to himself two weeks ahead of the meeting, but that the window had already passed. He said he would discuss the Bylaw amendment he was currently looking at, regarding the joint resolution process, later in the meeting.

**Aaron Yared** said that if Logan Jarrell was planning to propose a resolution, then that would count as an action item.

**Logan Jarrell** said it would be unproductive to present a short information item at the meeting if it could be a more substantial action item at the next meeting, equating the business of the meeting to something that could be an email.

**Aaron Yared** asked if a vote was necessary to cancel the upcoming Senate meeting.

**Logan Jarrell** said that it was technically within the President’s power, but that Aaron Yared could defer to the Committee if he wanted to.

**Andrew Shumway** said that if the Executive Committee was canceling the meeting, the Committee members should also ask themselves what more they could be doing or if the GPSS was doing enough as a body. He agreed that the GPSS should not have an unnecessary meeting but suggested that the GPSS reflect on whether the GPSS should do more if there was not enough business to attend to.

**Genevieve Hulley** said she was excited to meet with her working group because the group had made progress. She said that the GPSS could have people meeting in their working groups even without the meeting. She said that the winter quarter was tough, but that meetings should only be canceled once a quarter.

**Aaron Yared** agreed that only one meeting should be canceled per quarter. He said that he thought that the Bylaw amendment was worth mentioning and that he was curious to know if the Elections Committee had changed the rules for the upcoming election. He recalled that last winter quarter there were a lot of meetings filled with Bylaw amendments and Elections Committee business. He joked that Michael Diamond took care of it all last year so that there were no problems to solve this quarter.

**Monica Jensen** said that the Elections Committee had not met yet. She said that UAW 4121 was a good potential speaker to have in mind. She said that the GPSS should encourage people to check if they were part of the union, especially since the bargaining period was coming up, and work in concert with them.

**Logan Jarrell** said that everyone should suggest speaker ideas. He said he felt that Aaron Yared’s team had exclusively taken on the burden of deciding a speaker. He reminded everyone that they were all capable of reaching out. He said that this was the second time where the Executive Committee met and had no planned speaker for the Senate meeting. He said that last time the Executive Committee was fortunate enough to schedule somebody, but that the Committee was unable to this time. He said that it was a bit disappointing, but that it would be nice to give people a break every now and then.

**Aaron Yared** said that the majority of the speakers had approached him to talk to the GPSS. He pointed out Rene Singleton's note in the chat that historically, Senate meetings were held once a month and were two hours long. He said that taking that information into perspective, the current GPSS was doing more than before. He said that based on everything the Executive Committee had discussed, he was going to cancel the Senate meeting and extend an invitation to UAW 4121 to come speak at the meeting on the 24th. He said that he planned to have two speakers at that meeting unless anyone objected. He said that he had already confirmed with Dean Williamson-Lott and that having two speakers was not terrible, especially if there were not many action items on the agenda.

**Aaron Yared** asked everyone to send him questions in advance so he could send them to Dean Williamson-Lott. He said that Logan Jarrell would send out an announcement to all of the Senators asking for questions. He explained that Dean Williamson-Lott wanted to know what to address at the Senate meeting.

**Logan Jarrell** commented that having Dean Williamson-Lott and UAW 4121 speak at the same meeting was an interesting juxtaposition because it gave information to the Senators both as students and workers which provided a holistic view of graduate students.

**Aaron Yared** said that the meeting for next week was officially canceled.

# 7. [Action] Liaison Appointments 6:35pm

**Aaron Yared** said that the list of the final batch of Liaisons was linked to the agenda. He credited Ashlee Abrantes for doing the work to compile the names.

**Logan Jarrell** asked why some of the names were yellow.

**Ashlee Abrantes** said that the yellow signified people who needed to be approved.

**Monica Jensen** moved to approve of the new Liaison appointments. **Genevieve Hulley** seconded. No objections.

**Aaron Yared** congratulated Ashlee Abrantes for finishing Liaison recruitment and thanked her for all her work. He said he spoke with former GPSS President Giuliana Conti last week and she had been happy to hear how many Liaisons the GPSS had since there were not many last year.

# 8. [Information] Legislative Updates 6:38pm

**Abbie Shew** said she would update the Executive Committee on a couple of bills. She said HB 1472 was introduced in the House. She explained that HB 1472 added a graduate student to the Washington Student Achievement Council. She said that the External Team was very excited about this because historically, there had only been one student representative who was an undergraduate student. She said it was great that the State Legislature was considering graduate students as a separate population. She said that the External Team would follow the bill closely.

**Abbie Shew** said that a couple of bills that had testimony last week, Senate Bills 5227 and 5228, were related to diversity, equity, and anti-racism training. She said that Bill 5227 was related to training UW faculty and newly onboarded staff members. She said that part of the conversation would be about whether the training requirements would be retroactive for faculty that had already been employed by the UW. She said that Bill 5228 was very similar. She said that Bill 5228’s title was “Addressing Disproportionate Health Outcomes in Medical Training,” and would add a diversity requirement to the medical school curriculum. She said that she put a [link](https://www.tvw.org/watch/?clientID=9375922947&eventID=2021011422) to testimonies for Bill 5228 in the chat. She said that the testimonies started at the one hour, thirty-minute mark and said that some very powerful student testimonies moved the External Team to tears. She said that the External Team had been submitting testimonies almost every day and were really excited about those particular testimonies.

**Abbie Shew** said that the External Team was still trying to find a sponsor for the budget proviso in order to create a task force for a student health insurance study. She said that the bill had passed last year but was cut almost immediately post COVID, so the External Team was trying to get refund for the project. She said that the study was a necessary first step for reinstating health insurance. She said that the administration always argued that they did not know for sure whether people needed health insurance so the purpose of the study would be to provide that data. She said that the study would be done statewide, so it would assess the health insurance needs of both undergraduate and graduate students across the state. She explained that no one had sponsored the bill yet, but that the External Team was working very hard to get some people on it.

**Abbie Shew** said that the External Team was tracking a handful of other bills, including Senate Bill 5237 which would expand childcare and early development programs and lower-income requirements for subsidized childcare. She said that the team was also very interested in House Bill 1182 its companion bill Senate Bill 5209 which expanded the state’s new 988 mental health crisis line by adding more resources in terms of people to staff the line and dispatch materials during mental health crisis situations.

**Abbie Shew** said that House Bill 1009 adds abortion to student health insurance plans. She said that Hannah Sieben testified one the bill last week. She explained that GAIP already covered abortion, but that it would be good to have this policy as a statewide mandate because it was the External Team’s hope to have a universal student health insurance program. She said it would be great to have abortion covered in the student health insurance program. She said that the External Team was tracking a handful of other bills related to both K-12 and higher education. She invited everyone interested in the bills to ask her any questions.

**Abbie Shew** said that the External Team was still working on organizing Grad Day on the Hill and had received over 100 RSVPs. She said that the External Team did not have over 100 legislative meetings, so it was trying to increase the number of meetings. She remarked that the number of RSVPs exceeded the team’s expectations and that the team was very excited.

**Aaron Yared** congratulated Abbie Shew for the large number of RSVPs. He said that he remembered standing in front of the Senate after he and she had set up all the appointments. He said that last year only about twenty-five people had showed up and that it was awesome to have a larger turn out. He asked Abbie Shew whether she knew of any bills regarding accessibility in higher education.

**Abbie Shew** said that she currently was not aware of any amongst the bills that she had been tracking.

**Aaron Yared** asked whether she knew who the sponsor for last year’s budget proviso was.

**Abbie Shew** said that Payton Swinford had the information but she did not know the information off the top of her head. She said that the External Team had reached out to the people who had sponsored it last year but that they were not willing to sponsor it again this year for political reasons.

**Logan Jarrell** moved to extend time by three minutes. **Britahny Baskin** seconded. No objections.

**Logan Jarrell** acknowledged that climate change was a back-page issue. He asked whether there had been any focus on House Bill 1099, which was sponsored by Gerry Pollet and Frank Chopp. He asked if the External Team was tracking House Bill 1099.

**Abbie Shew** said that the External Team was tracking it and that the Team was also tracking House Bill 1084 which was about decarbonization and reducing emissions.

**Britahny Baskin** asked how important the student health insurance stuff was. She explained that she had been working in the student health insurance working group and she was only aware of two health insurance policies, the International Student Health Insurance Plan (ISHIP) and GAIP. She said that GAIP only covered about a third of the graduate students and that one of the people in her working group had expressed how medical students paid for school and had access to neither ISHIP nor GAIP and had to go on the market. She said it was important that the GPSS follow the issue because a lot of people were not covered and had to go into the market to buy insurance due to lack of options.

**Abbie Shew** said that the External Team heard a lot about Cascade Care, the new state Medicaid program that had just started this fiscal year. She said that a lot of legislators had told the Team that it would solve all of the students’ problems and that everybody would receive accessible health insurance. She said that the fact was that Cascade Care had solved none of the problems faced by graduate students. She said that it made it harder for students to be eligible for Medicare since the pool had been expanded so much because Cascade Care restricted the number of people eligible for Medicare. She said that the Team had been working on the issue: she had personally pushed for this issue every single year in her three years as the GPSS Organizing Director. She said that the Team was very excited last year when the proviso was passed and devastated when it was cut in the summer.

# 9. [Information] Joint Resolution Process Updates 6:49pm

**Logan Jarrell** said he had been working with the members of the ASUW Board of Directors and the ASUW Senate to figure out how the process would look like. He said that the ASUW had drafted an organic act. He said that the joint resolution process involved introducing legislation written with identical language and sentiments to both governments at roughly the same time.

He said that upon passing the second reading, the resolutions were checked for identical language. If the language is not identical, a reconciliation process would be started by the ASUW’s Oversight Committee. Logan Jarrell said that this work did not apply to the GPSS’s Judicial Committee, but that the Executive Committee was most suited for this type of business. He noted that the ASUW Board of Directors needed to review the legislation as well, but that the authors of the joint resolution process were trying to avoid a third reading of anything unless absolutely necessary.

**Andrew Shumway** said that in his undergraduate institution’s student government, there existed not a Reconciliation Committee but an ad hoc committee composed of people passionate about the bill instead. He said it was a way to get more people who were experts in the bill’s subject matter involved rather than having a reconciliation committee with a broad subject matter expertise.

**Logan Jarrell** clarified that he was not suggesting creating a special committee. He said that the authors were more inclined to utilize the existing Oversight Committee. He noted that ASUW’s rules were more strict on how committees were defined and there was not an applicable way to create an ad hoc committee whose purpose was temporary.

**Antonio Gonzalez** agreed with Logan Jarrell and also placed the official language of the joint resolution process into the chat. He said it was presented to the ASUW Steering Committee that night and was referred to the full-body favorably so the Senate would be meeting and debating on the Resolution on Tuesday. He said that there were already steps to get the process codified.

**Logan Jarrell** clarified that the Steering Committee’s reading acted as a first reading so if the resolution was brought to the ASUW Senate, it would pass similar to how the GPSS passed last week’s petition. He said that due to how the GPSS’s rules were set up, the GPSS would need to pass a Bylaw amendment and a memorandum to expound more on the process. He said it was unusual for GPSS Bylaws to have a lot of description. He said that Bylaws should be a little vaguer, but not too vague as to be unusable as that was the purpose of a memorandum.

**Antonio Gonzalez** said that Logan Jarrell was correct about the first reading. He said that the ASUW had suspended their rules tonight and went directly into second reading to fast-track the legislative process. He expressed his belief that the organic act would be treated as a Special Order of the Day, meaning that the act would skip first readings. He said that ASUW Senators would be able to debate about it on Tuesday.

**Logan Jarrell** said that he would attend the ASUW Senate meeting next week to provide some GPSS support.

**Aaron Yared** thanked Logan Jarrell for the updates and said it was fine if both governments’ joint resolution processes did not mirror one another as long as it got done.

**Logan Jarrell** said that they did not have to be one-to-one but they did have to work together.

# 10. [Information] Announcements 6:55pm

**Antonio Gonzalez** asked who he should contact if he wanted to learn about the GPSS stipend. He said that the ASUW was exploring a similar system for committee chairs and trying to figure out how executive members and Officers were held accountable to student dollars.

**Aaron Yared** recommended that Antonio Gonzalez talk with Jules Overfelt since they could give him actual numbers. He also referred Antonio Gonzalez to Logan Jarrell and himself regarding the responsibilities.

**Logan Jarrell** encouraged Antonio Gonzalez to consult with Rene Singleton.

**Ashlee Abrantes** asked people who were not affiliated with the College of the Environment to give her a few minutes of their time over the next few weeks so that she could learn how everyone’s respective department worked. She promised to be flexible with scheduling and said that she was just looking to gather information. She invited people to reach out to her through Slack.

**Andrew Shumway** said he was at fault for not providing good transition documents for this year’s Elections Committee. He said that according to the GPSS Bylaws, the elections would occur during the spring quarter and shall be announced no later than the last regular GPSS meeting in January. He said that the Elections Committee missed the timeline and were not in line with the GPSS Bylaws. He said that other Elections Committee deadlines were coming up and said he would be open to meeting with Monica Jensen and Marty Varela to provide transition materials. He also acknowledged that Monica Jensen and Marty Varela were busy with other matters and suggested that they meet soon.

**Logan Jarrell** said he had connected with Marty Varela about the Elections Committee. He announced that the Equity and Accountability Committee (E&A) was ready to release its Senate Composition Survey. He said that since the GPSS had a list of Liaisons, a list of Senators, a list of staff, and a list of Officers, it was possible to measure the percentage of people who had completed the survey. He said that E&A was thinking about encouraging people to complete the survey with an incentive. He said that E&A was unsure what that would look like because it was hard to offer much in a remote setting and would appreciate any feedback on the idea. He asked everyone to complete the survey and said it would be sent out either tonight or tomorrow morning.

**Logan Jarrell** said he would include the survey in the “No Senate meeting” announcement with other announcements.

**Aaron Yared** said that Justin Camputaro wrote in the chat to tell everyone that the HUB was open. She asked everyone to spread the word.

**Rene Singleton** said that the HUB was open, but that people had to sit in designated, socially distanced chairs. She said the people could only occupy one chair in a table that normally seated four. She said that the HUB was not open to meetings or entertainment; it was only open for socially distanced studying and taking classes.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the Senate roster was up online. He said it had been public for a week and that his team would make small tweaks to it. He acknowledged that the Senate roster was made possible through the work of several people, especially Gina Rome, the GPSS Administrative Specialist.

# 11. [Action] Adjournment 7:00pm

**Monica Jensen** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Abbie Shew** seconded. No objections.

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