GPSS Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 17th 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 5:36pm

**Aaron Yared** called the meeting to order at 5:36pm.

# 2. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 5:36pm

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

# 3. [Action] Approval of the Minutes 5:36pm

**Logan Jarrell** voiced his concern about the description of Medicaid and Cascade Care.

**Abbie Shew** said that the word ‘restricted’ should be changed to ‘increased.’

**Janis Shin** affirmed that the change was made.

**Logan Jarrell** moved to approve the minutes. **Monica Jensen** seconded. No objections.

# 4. [Information] Elections Committee Report 5:38pm

**Monica Jensen** said that the Elections Committee would need to present at the next Senate meeting. She said that the Committee had been making progress on this year’s Election Guide. She said that the Officer Election was set for April 21st. She said that the Committee was currently focused on logistics. She noted that the Bylaws specified how elections were to be conducted. She said that the Committee considered using an external service that would tally up results from ranked-choice ballots, but that the Committee ultimately decided that it was not a good plan because it would take time and energy to learn the system. She said that the current plan was to tally the votes on the night of the elections which she said was not difficult to do. She noted that there was no specific rule in the Bylaws about what to do if two candidates tied for last. She said that in the event of an instant runoff, the last place candidate’s votes were dissolved and distributed to candidates with more votes. She said that the current Committee had a section copied from the Bylaws at the end of the elections guide that explains the specifics of the election. She said that the Committee hoped to add more specifics about possible tie cases and tie-breaking procedures.

**Rene Singleton** said that the GPSS could run its voting program through the Husky Link website from the Student Activities Office (SAO) and have the votes counted electronically. She recommended that the Committee meet with Christina Coop at the SAO. She offered to arrange the meeting if Monica Jensen emailed her about it.

**Monica Jensen** said that she or the Elections Committee Chair would. She noted that Kira Sue Renfro was the Chair and had decided to personally enforce the rules to avoid mistakes made in prior elections.

**Andrew Shumway** asked whether there was a reason that the Elections Committee decided not to use a Google Form as a ballot like last year’s Committee.

**Monica Jensen** said that the Committee except Christina planned to use a Google Form. She said that the Committee favored using a Google Form and Google Sheet because it was the most transparent.

**Logan Jarrell** asked whether the Committee was looking into steps that would make the elections more accessible. He said that accessibility was one of the top priorities for last year’s Election Committee.

**Monica Jensen** asked what Logan Jarrell meant by accessibility. She said that the Elections Committee planned to focus on using platforms that the GPSS Senators were used to.

**Logan Jarrell** asked how the Elections Committee was making it more accessible for people to run.

**Andrew Shumway** clarified that one of the concerns of last year’s Elections Committee was how to make it more accessible for all graduate students to run. He said that one specific example was candidates whose first language was not English. He said they might be at a disadvantage given the format of candidate speeches. He said that there was not a recommendation, but rather that it was just a finding of a potential issue.

**Monica Jensen** said that the Elections Committee had not talked about it, but that she would bring it up and try to figure out a solution. She asked if anyone had any immediate thoughts on how to solve the issue.

**Jules Overfelt** suggested making a list of potential questions. They said that the GPSS often saw similar questions every year. They said that when they ran for office, they had gone through the minutes to get an idea of what kind of questions people usually ask. They said having a list of questions would help those without the foresight or institutional knowledge that minutes were accessible and make running easier.

**Logan Jarrell** said that the Equity and Accessibility Committee (E&A) had talked about this two or three weeks ago. He said that he could get notes from the previous E&A meeting and offered to send them to Monica Jensen so that she could share them with the Elections Committee.

**Britahny Baskin** asked whether the GPSS could implement the recommended Zoom settings from the last Executive meeting. She said that offering a kind of stump speech in advance still put an onus on a person that spoke English as a second language to be able to translate it but that the listeners would not have to worry about translating things in real-time.

**Jules Overfelt** said that it was a good idea to consider. They said that most students have had the experience of recording themselves, whether on Zoom or a different platform and posting a video. They said that it was not a totally unreasonable request or opportunity. They said that they did not know if it would be something that would be required the way that resumes and statements were, but they were open to the idea.

**Aaron Yared** said it was an interesting idea but noted that it could bring up some equity issues because some people might have access to fancy video editing software that others might not. He said that it may be necessary to put specific guidelines around the video.

**Genevieve Hulley** said that she loved the live captioning and that it was something that the GPSS could implement easily. She said that the candidates would still have to do a live Q and A. She said that even if the candidates made pre-recorded videos of their speech, it might take more time since the GPSS would have to switch between playing a video and live Q and A.

**Genevieve Hulley** motioned to extend for two minutes. **Monica Jensen** seconded. No objections.

**Britahny Baskin** suggested allowing people access the pre-recorded speech videos in advance so that only Q and A would happen live. She said she was not sure how to increase accessibility in the case of people who did not learn English as their first language.

**Genevieve Hulley** said that most candidates were encouraged, but not required, to submit a summary of their platform. She said that she had made one that was composed of a design and some text. She said that there were set dates that governed how early the summary could be distributed. She said that the written summary could be made required by the Elections Committee. She asked if it was a possible barrier to entry.

**Logan Jarrell** said that he thought that candidates were required to submit a statement of objectives and a resume last year because those were the documents he had to remove from the GPSS website.

**Aaron Yared** said that was how he remembered it too. He said he did not know whether a statement was a requirement.

**Monica Jensen** said she was aware that the Elections Committee had to finish making the rules by next week. She said that all the Committee members were very busy so she would add the suggestions from the Executive Committee and simply increase the candidates’ options on how to run in the election. She said that she did not foresee the Elections Committee changing any of the requirements. She said that the Committee would probably send out the campaigning materials and give an option to have a pre-recorded speech rather than a live speech. She said that the Committee would probably not change any of the rules.

# 5. [Action] Senate Meeting Agenda 5:54pm

**Aaron Yared** said that Dean Joy Williamson-Lott would be coming to speak. He said that he had not received any questions from students for her and said that he would try to push for questions again today. He explained that Dean Joy Williamson-Lott wanted questions ahead of time so that she could come prepared. He noted that the window was closing quickly. He asked Logan Jarrell to send out a message asking Senators for questions. He said that the Officer Election topic would be an item on the agenda. He said that the only things that the Executive Committee needed to figure out immediately were who would give the land acknowledgment and what the question would be for breakout rooms.

**Andrew Shumway** said that the passing of the Elections Guide was like any other resolution with the only difference being that the Elections Guide was an internal governing document. He said that the item should receive as much time on the agenda as any other resolution.

**Jules Overfelt** suggested fifteen minutes. They said that if the Senators needed more time, then they would add more. They said that the Senators would ask questions and want an explanation more than amendments to the Election Guide.

**Aaron Yared** asked for ideas on what to talk about in the breakout rooms.

**Monica Jensen** suggested, “What would you have done for spring break if we could go places?”

**Britahny Baskin** suggested, “How did you spend the snow weekend?”

**Jules Overfelt** suggested, “How are you guys honoring black history month?”

**Aaron Yared** asked whether anyone had a preference between the three suggestions.

**Jules Overfelt** said it might be beneficial for some of the Executive Committee members to talk about events so that they can invite people to movie night if the people say that they don’t have any plans.

**Ashlee Abrantes** said that GO-MAP had quite a few things going on this month and that she could have their emails at the ready.

**Aaron Yared** suggested that the Executive Committee check the GO-MAP website and see if it had anything happening after the 24th.

**Britahny Baskin** recommended the Netflix movie 13th. She said she thought it was very illuminating. She explained that the movie was about America’s prison system and the 13th amendment.

**Aaron Yared** suggested *Judas and the Black Messiah* and *Just Mercy.*

**Genevieve Hulley** said that she would call to arrange it tomorrow.

**Aaron Yared** said that the Executive Committee should see if there were any other events that UW, especially graduate organizations, were hosting so that the GPSS could offer more things just in case the move did not work out.

**Britahny Baskin** moved to approve the Senate meeting agenda. **Logan Jarrell** seconded. No objections.

# 6. [Information] Legislative Agenda 6:04pm

**Abbie Shew** said that there had been two budget provisos introduced in the past couple weeks which the External Team was excited about. She reported that Washington State Senator Marko Liias was reviving the healthcare study proviso and proposed $100,000 for the task force that got cut earlier this summer. She noted that $100,000 was not very much money and that the External Team hoped to get it approved so that the state legislature could resume discussions on health insurance again.

**Abbie Shew** said that Washington State Representative Gerry Pollet introduced or would soon introduce a $1 million graduate student aid budget proviso. She said that it was the first-ever graduate student funding budget proviso that the state of Washington had ever seen. She acknowledged that it was not a lot of money when compared to the total amount of money that higher education received from the state. She said that it was exciting that the graduate students were taken seriously as a population of people that needed funding.

**Abbie Shew** said a couple of other updates to the COVID relief bill were sent to the governor. She said it contained $5 million in stimulus checks. She said that all undocumented students would receive $1200 stimulus checks.

**Abbie Shew** said that the bill to add a graduate student to the Washington Student Achievement Council (WASC) was referred to the Rules Committee, which meant it was moving along and more likely to pass. She said that the two diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) training bills that were discussed at the last Executive meeting were still in the process of being passed. She said that the more generic bill concerning DEI training for faculty had more stipulations added to it. She said that the university said that they needed to hire a new staff member to comply with the bill. She said that the bill was becoming more and more complicated, narrowing its chance of passing, but that the External Team was still hopeful.

**Abbie Shew** said that the other DEI bill regarding equity training in the medical school curriculum was heard in the Ways and Means Committee today. She explained that the bill would transfer most of the financial impact from UW to its School of Medicine. She said that the External Team viewed this as a positive sign because the School of Medicine had more money that it did not know what to do with.

**Abbie Shew** said she was personally tracking House Bill 1067 which would designate the *Suciasaurus rex* as the official dinosaur of the state of Washington.

**Britahny Baskin** asked how she could learn more about the healthcare study proviso.

**Abbie Shew** said that budget provisos flew under the radar in committee documents but that the External Team was tracking it. She said that once it was officially scheduled in a committee, the Team would let people know because the Team would later want people to sign in favor of the bill. She asked everyone to keep an eye on their email. She said that they did not yet have any concrete details about it because it had not been officially introduced.

# 7. [Information] Joint Resolution Process Updates 6:10pm

**Logan Jarrell** said that the joint resolution process passed in the ASUW Senate overwhelmingly. He thanked Antonio Gonzalez and others for making it a smooth process. He said he would present the joint resolution process by the last Senate meeting of the quarter so that the process could be utilized next quarter. He said that some ASUW Senators expressed interest in a joint resolution at the ASUW Senate.

**Aaron Yared** clarified that Logan Jarrell planned to introduce the process in the meeting after the upcoming Senate meeting.

**Logan Jarrell** said that it would require a Bylaw amendment that defined it as a type of main motion and it also needed a memorandum that defined how one actually implemented specifics. He said that the Bylaws needed a specific level of vagueness whereas the memorandum needed to be very exact.

# 8. [Information] Announcements 6:12pm

**Logan Jarrell** encouraged everyone to complete the GPSS Composition Survey. He said that the number of survey responses collected so far was less than anticipated. He said that the Equity and Accountability Committee aimed to deliver a report by the first Senate meeting of the next quarter. He said he preferred not to present the results at the second Senate meeting of the next quarter because it would coincide with the Officer Elections. He said that the survey results could help people make more informed decisions.

**Aaron Yared** asked people to submit questions for Dean Joy Williamson-Lott in the Google Form that Logan had sent out. He reiterated that the Dean wanted to tailor her presentation to the needs and interests of the students.

**Ashlee Abrantes** asked whether people were willing to give feedback on the return to campus survey. She said that the sooner the Executive Committee could come up with data, the better that the conversations with the administration would go. She said that she would put a link in Slack. She said that because the administration really wanted the data, she was working to incentivize filling out the survey by collecting gift cards to raffle. She asked how people thought things would be best utilized. She said that the bookstore had given her multiple gift cards. She asked whether it would be better to have one gift card worth $500 for groceries or whether it would be better to have five gift cards worth $100 or 100 gift cards worth $5. She said that she would appreciate feedback on opinions on how to divide the gift card sums.

**Janis Shin** asked how Dean Joy Williamson-Lott’s decisions influenced graduate students. She asked what kind of problems that the Dean could solve for graduate students.

**Aaron Yared** explained that the Graduate School acted as a portal for applications and kept track of milestones. He said that the Graduate School also created supplemental funding and programming for departments and conducted department reviews for all of the graduate programs.

**Aaron Yared** said that the main area where graduate students might have questions were about supplemental funding, programming, and graduate student organizations. He suggested asking questions regarding those topics. He said that a good question for new Senators would be “What is the Graduate School and how does it relate to GPSS?” He said that these were all important questions for the reason that Janis Shin asked since it was hard to know what to ask if one did not know what the Graduate School was.

# 9. [Action] Adjournment 6:18pm

**Andrew Shumway** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Britahny Baskin** seconded. No objections.

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